Applied Shakespeare: a transformative encounter

An analysis of Shakespeare's use within applied theatre settings, for transformative purposes.

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‘Whatever is in front of you will soon be behind you’ (J. Hulsmeier)

Our doubts are traitors and make us lose the good we oft might win by fearing to attempt

(Shakespeare, Lucio: *Measure for Measure,* Act One, Scene Four)

Thesis Abstract

The purpose of this thesis is to provide a contribution to new knowledge surrounding debate relative to the challenges that arise when applied theatre companies use Shakespeare's work for transformative purposes.

Often the justification behind selecting Shakespeare's plays as a tool to aid transformation is founded in the promotion of a universalising discourse. This discourse can afford an 'unreflective affirmation' of a range of ideals promoted through the engagement with Shakespeare's plays. The implication is that complex and complicated profiles of characters, found in Shakespeare's plays, can be promoted and explored by potentially vulnerable communities of people as a 'blue-print' for learning about, and transforming oneself. The ideals promoted can often be assumptive and taken-for-granted beliefs about the work that often override the consideration of the political and cultural values embedded in Shakespeare's own theatre.

The method of Critical Discourse Analysis is employed to explore and acknowledge the challenges inherent in applied theatre generally. A case study analysis of three salient community projects is undertaken to demonstrate where work of this nature exists. The thesis undertakes close analysis of the Education Shakespeare Company (prison), the Blue Apple Theatre Company (Disability), and the Combat Veteran Players (therapy).

As a method of subverting the universalisation of Shakespeare's plays, and overcoming some of the challenges found in combining Shakespeare's work with applied theatre formats, the thesis suggests the use of new historicism and Brecht's

historicisation and verfremdungseffekt. For demonstrative purposes, the thesis applies an historical reading to Shakespeare's *Measure for Measure*, *Macbeth*, *Richard III*, *Henry VI Part One & Two*, and *Hamlet*. The method demonstrates how participants are afforded an opportunity to grapple with unresolved questions and concentrate the mind in order to find relevant and appropriate opportunities to create change and transformation.

The thesis recommends that a critical and historical reading of Shakespeare's plays remains important to applied theatre practice and identifies three main provocations of practice in order to: 1) offer the participants a safe distance when exploring opportunities for transformation, 2) subvert the universalising discourse to avoid assumptive and taken-for-granted beliefs about Shakespeare's work, 3) challenge the concept of universal truth and demonstrate where differences and not similarities exist.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

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Chapter One: Introduction

1.1 Rationale

Applied Theatre is an umbrella term for a range of theatre practices which operate beyond traditional theatre settings (see 2.1). It is theatre concerned with social and political change, and characterised as work that deliberately engages marginalised communities (see 2.2). The purpose of the practice is to use theatre to help communities of people engage with themes or issues to create some level of transformation (see 2.3). Through various levels of active participation (see 2.4) applied theatre projects use different drama-focused tools to bring diverse groups of people together to explore the possibilities for change. Shakespeare's plays are often used as a tool to incite change, as the results are suggested to be transformative for those involved (Cox, 1992: Linklater, 1993: Hughes, 1993: Cox & Thielgaard, 1994: Jacobs, 2008, Walsh: 2012).

Shakespeare's subtle exploration of moral issues, analysis of human and social problems, and his attempt to grapple with 'timeless' and 'universal' themes have for many years made his plays appear an ideal vehicle for artists concerned with raising public and political consciousness, and promoting social and individual transformation amongst marginalised communities. Over four hundred years after his death, Shakespeare's works are still being performed and adapted, and 'few other entities can claim to match the range of contact across disciplines and countries that his work and cultural impact have produced' (Semple & Vyroubalova, 2018, p.83). In this way, Shakespeare's works have appealed to a wide range of applied theatre projects for their opportunities to promote critical and collaborative reflection. There is now an established history of presenting Shakespeare's work in a range of applied theatre

settings, transferring his plays into prisons, old people's homes, schools, heritage sites, and to different countries and for different cultures (Trounstine, 2007: Scott-Douglass, 2007: Bates, 2013).

Despite positive and widespread interactions with Shakespeare's work in general terms, in the arena of applied Shakespeare there is evidence that the use of Shakespeare's work can be in tension with the inherent challenges bound to an applied format of theatre, and although Shakespeare is one of the most documented writers in history, the literature exploring such challenges is underdeveloped (Dobson, 2011: Nicholson, 2012). The existing literature addressing the use of Shakespeare's work in applied theatre settings also tends to emphasise 'common sense' and 'taken-for-granted' beliefs regarding Shakespeare's work under the guise of 'timelessness', 'plurality' and 'universality'; paying less attention to interrogating the political, cultural and historical values that might be promoted through the adaptation of his plays (Finkelstein, 1973: Bristol, 1996). Therefore this thesis is driven by gaps in the existing empirical literature in order to widen the interrogation surrounding the challenges that arise when using Shakespeare's work within applied environments. The thesis also questions the tendency to rely upon a universalising discourse when using Shakespeare's plays to generate possibilities for transformation.

This study begins with an interest in exploring the challenges faced when combining Shakespeare's work with applied theatre settings, for transformative purposes. It addresses the three main propositions that:

1) Applied theatre is bound to inherent challenges.

2) A universalising discourse is often relied upon when using Shakespeare's plays to generate possibilities for transformation which can often mean that

assumptive and taken-for-granted beliefs about Shakespeare's plays override the consideration of the political and cultural values embedded in Shakespeare's own theatre.

3) The use of Shakespeare's work amidst marginalised communities means that potentially vulnerable communities of people are asked to engage with complex and complicated characters for transformative purposes.

To address these propositions the thesis will explore values drawn from performance ethnography, interrogate published works about practice-as-research, and analyse three salient applied theatre projects and their use of Shakespeare's plays. The intention will be to present a critical and analytical exploration of the challenges that may be faced in attempting to use Shakespeare's work to achieve transformative outcomes.

Chapter two represents the context chapter of the thesis and is concerned with outlining the context and theories of applied theatre, its definitions, histories, concepts and influences. It questions:

- What is the definition of 'applied theatre'?
- What are the history, concepts, and theories of applied theatre?
- How does applied theatre attempt to achieve transformation?
- How does applied theatre attempt to capture levels of 'active participation'?
- How does applied theatre practice define 'marginalised communities'?

Chapter three is concerned with addressing the proposition that applied theatre is bound to inherent challenges before Shakespeare's work has been considered as a tool to generate opportunities for transformation. The work will explore the inherent

challenges bound to applied theatre projects, with particular focus upon its desire to achieve transformation and levels of active participation for marginalised communities. Chapter Three will address the general challenges of applied theatre in relation to participation, marginalised communities and transformation. These chapters ask:

- What are the ensuing challenges for an applied format of theatre that aims to achieve transformation?
- What are the challenges for an applied format of theatre that aims to achieve levels of 'active participation'?
- What are the challenges for an applied format of theatre that aims to access marginalised communities?

Chapter Four represents the literature review chapter for the thesis, focussing upon some of the most relevant publications that address the topic of Shakespeare's use within applied theatre settings, it asks:

- Where is Shakespeare's work used as a tool for transformation in applied theatre settings?
- Why is Shakespeare's work used as a tool for transformation in applied theatre settings?

Chapters 5.1, 5.2, 6.1, 6.2, 7.1, and 7.2 aims to explore the general origins and challenges of prison theatre, Disability theatre and theatre therapy. Recognising that each individual area that falls into the category of applied theatre has its own history, discourse, purpose and challenges, each chapter will begin by establishing the general history and context of theatre's role within each marginalised community. These chapters will establish the inherent challenges of combining theatre with various

communities as a wider analysis of the work. They make up peripheral, but important interrogations into the challenges surrounding the practice. It must also be acknowledged that some of the ensuing challenges have crossovers between the different environments and communities explored. To not repeat findings the structure aims to break the concepts into separate explorations but asks the reader to be mindful of the fact that some of the challenges discovered impact most, if not all, of the marginalised communities explored. Chapters 5.3, 6.3 and 7.3 also formalise the history of each community's use of Shakespeare's work in more specific terms. It provides a deeper understanding of the different forms of theatre that use Shakespeare's plays as a part of their work. The chapters address the following questions:

- What are the histories, theories and concepts of each marginalised community engaging with applied theatre?
- What are the challenges for applied theatre's application within each marginalised community?

Chapter 5.4, 5.5, 6.4, and 7.4 will look at the importance of an historical reading of Shakespeare's plays and establish knowledge of the work's political and historical context(s) to subvert assumptive readings of the plays, avoid the use of a universalising discourse, and acknowledge important political and cultural values important at the time in which the plays were created. The analytical framework will be grounded in historical exploration through the method of new historicism and Brecht's historicisation and verfremdungseffekt, underpinned by literary criticism (see 1.3.3a, 1.3.3b). The chapters attempt to match the applied community with specific Shakespearean plays. It is important to acknowledge that, although a logical

combination between Shakespeare's work and the different communities being explored are made, this does not necessarily mean that these texts are used by applied theatre practitioners within each specific community. For demonstrative purposes the chapters attempt to logically pair different plays with each applied environment. The penal environment is explored in relation to *Measure for Measure,* crime and criminals in relation to *Macbeth,* Disability as presented in *Henry VI part one and two and Richard III,* and mental health in relation to *Hamlet.* These chapters ask:

- What values and notions about humanity might Shakespeare depict and/or promote through his work?
- What kind of critical attitudes, values and/or assumptions are bound up with Shakespeare's work and may be promoted through it?

Chapters 5.6, 6.5, and 7.5 offer an exploration of how three salient theatre companies, currently working in the UK have used Shakespeare's work to engage different marginalised communities. The companies referenced ask their participants to perform or study Shakespeare's work practically and theatrically as active participants (see 1.3 and 2.3). The companies explored are the Education Shakespeare Company (ESC) with prisoners, the Blue Apple Theatre Company (Blue Apple) with Disability, and the Combat Veteran Players (CVP) with therapy. They present clear examples of the different environments and communities Shakespeare's work is 'put to use' in. The projects were selected because they represent Shakespeare's use amidst three different areas of marginalisation: prison, Disability and within therapeutic settings. The selection criteria for choosing the case studies is based on their use of Shakespeare's work as a central element of their project and the participant's practical engagement with the work from the perspective of 'active performer'. The thesis also

selects projects that attempt to use Shakespeare's work to achieve transformation. It is important to note at this early point that the ESC is concerned with making filmic and not theatrical adaptations of Shakespeare's plays, which emerged from drama workshops with the prisoners. Although filmic and not theatre-based, the case study remains a relevant example of how Shakespeare's work is used for transformative purposes. This is work that engages with groups of people, in spaces different to the mainstream, 'it is in response to social or political challenges and is seen as a process where difference and change can be wrought through its making' (O'Connor & O'Connor, 2009, p.471). ESC through using film with prisoners still fulfils the purposes of an applied theatre project.

There were many case studies that were considered as part of the thesis. There was an awareness of work that exists which requires participation and interaction with the material, but from what can be regarded as a more peripheral perspective that does not necessarily focus upon transformation. The Castle Players, Northern Broadsides, The Shakespeare Workout Programme, and Shakespeare Comes to Broadmoor, were all explored as potential case studies to be used within the thesis, and although these companies may look at the issues embedded in the work (as part of a workshop or question and answer session etc.), the participant is not the sole focus of the work, and not all of these examples highlight companies who engage with marginalised communities but rather communities generally. Therefore, companies were not selected for the fact that they either did not engage with marginalised communities, they did not ask the participant to be the sole focus of the work, or they represented a combination of both. Chapter 2.3 is also important in helping the thesis justify the selection of the case studies used throughout the thesis.

The case studies selected offer adaptations of Shakespeare's works where the work retains the original structure and much of the language of Shakespeare, but often edits out material and truncates the text with a view to making the language and characters more understandable. Appropriation is also a term used in connection to applied theatre's use of Shakespeare and called upon intermittently throughout this thesis. There is acknowledgement that adaptation and appropriation are different terms and offer different connotations. Appropriation is used when the work represents a more sustained reworking of plots and characters in an effort to exploit or benefit from the cultural authority associated with Shakespeare. Appropriation is therefore used throughout this thesis when highlighting where Shakespeare's plays may have functioned as a vehicle for accruing power, prestige, and cultural capital. It is acknowledged that this method of using the cultural power found in Shakespeare's texts can be damaging to the work itself as:

> 'some scholars suggest that appropriations have the potential to 'abuse' texts or their audiences […] appropriations of Shakespeare's texts can perform ideological violence […] institutions like governments or corporations often 'do violence to the perceived text in order to help sustain oppressive systems', or by contrast popularising Shakespeare with youth culture has led; first to, dumbing down Shakespeare'. (Taylor, 2010, p.24)

The case study chapters aim to explore who the companies are, why they perceive Shakespeare's work to be beneficial, how they use Shakespeare's work, and interrogate any challenges they face in doing so. These chapters ask:

- Where and when does Shakespeare's work exist within marginalised communities and in applied settings?

- Where is Shakespeare's work used as a tool in applied theatre settings and why is the work regarded as a beneficial addition to this area of practice?

- What challenges might each community face when combining Shakespeare with the intentions of applied theatre?

The diverse nature of the selected case studies affords the thesis an opportunity to consider analytical comparisons of how Shakespeare's work is used within different marginalised communities. The analysis represents projects that celebrate the successes of Shakespeare's use, but also offer important articulations regarding the challenges of the work. All case studies represent projects that ask for high levels of active participation, use Shakespeare's work as the main focus of the project, and work with marginalised communities of people. Collectively the projects highlight how Shakespeare's work is used in multifarious environments and diverse communities.

Chapters 8, 8.1, 8.2, and 8.3 bring together the provocations of practice that are offered as a result of applying new historicism, and Brecht's historicisation and verfremdungseffekt to the readings of a range of Shakespeare's plays. The chapters offer a range of provocations for practice in response to applied theatre practitioners who use Shakespeare's work for transformative purposes. The chapters offer historical interpretations of the plays *Measure for Measure, Macbeth, Richard III, Henry VI Part One and Two,* and *Hamlet.* The chapter asks:

- What are the main provocations of practice informed by the Renaissance readings of Shakespeare's plays?

- What can New Historicism and Brecht's historicisation and verfremdungseffekt contribute to explorations of Shakespeare's plays in an applied theatre setting?

The chapter suggests three main provocations for practice, in order to:

1) Offer participants a safe distance from the work when exploring the opportunities for transformation.
2) Subvert the universalising discourse to avoid generalisations, assumptions and taken-for-granted beliefs about Shakespeare's work.
3) Challenge the concept of universal truths.

This thesis is not intended as a criticism with regard to the use of Shakespeare's work within community and non-traditional settings, but rather an exploration into the challenges that surround this field of practice and the types of critical attitudes, values, taken-for-granted beliefs, and/or assumptions which are bound up with this work and promoted through it. The thesis does not aim to make accurate predictions about the uses of the work, and because of the nature of the work and its subjectivity from the perspective of practitioner and participant, the thesis does not determine the success of, cause and/or effect. The thesis does not aim to provide lessons for practice and it is not intended to advocate Shakespeare's work in applied settings. It would also be unrealistic to expect this thesis to represent the entirety of this discipline; therefore the thesis draws primarily on a selection of different communities that use Shakespeare's plays within their projects. I have never been involved in any form of applied Shakespeare, and therefore I am not writing from the viewpoint of an expert in the field, but rather as an academic hoping to question the practice. The thesis ultimately stands to offer provocations for practice.

1.2 Motivation, background, and parameters for the research

There were four areas of interest that motivated this thesis, simultaneously providing the initial parameters for the research. These areas of interest are related to:

1) How the universalising discourse, often used in connection with Shakespeare's work, may promote assumptive and taken-for-granted beliefs about the plays and their uses.

2) How current cultural values may provide a justification for Shakespeare's continual use within the applied theatre field.

3) How a requirement of applied theatre, to identify with Shakespeare's characters for purposes of instruction and healing, may be damaging to a marginalised community especially if they are asked to identify with the plays via a universalising discourse.

4) How an historical reading of Shakespeare's work may help to subvert the aforementioned.

1.2.1 Universalising discourse

For centuries Shakespeare's works have been an important source of inspiration for academics and practitioners alike, and many artists are motivated to 'borrow' from the bard. His canonical texts appear to inspire and impact those who interact with his plays. His works are also transformed to diverse geographical spaces, alternative cultural environments, and delivered via a range of different theatrical forms. The longevity of his work and the lesson to be found therein, appear to connect ideas of relatability and timelessness which is promoted as a reason for his work's continued

use. Shakespeare's work is justified as being able to 'transcend' through time because of its 'universalising force', promoting the notion that Shakespeare's plays deal with 'eternal' struggles that can be used to teach an audience lessons about humanity 400 years after they were created.

This thesis is concerned with identifying the challenges that arise when using 'universality' as a reason to put Shakespeare's plays 'to use' in a range of theatrical settings. The universalising discourse means that our culture makes certain assumptions about Shakespeare's work and the perspective from which Shakespeare operates, how we assume he intended his works to be used, and/or how we believe his works should be used. This argument suggests that the universalising discourse often employed when using Shakespeare's texts offers an implied validity in the use of his plays. That Shakespeare's work is to be taken at 'face-value', and because his plays deal with supposed versions of humanity that will always remain relevant; the universalising discourse implies that his works should never be questioned or interrogated, but delivered to a range of communities as a 'blue-print' for learning about, and transforming oneself.

As an example of the application of a universal vision for Shakespeare's work, Weinberg & Rowe (1996, pp.1-5) promise to offer their readers 'a compassionate revealing book, that lets Shakespeare help you with your job, your friends, and your personal and romantic life', through Shakespeare's 'humanistic, everyday psychology'. Shakespeare assumes the role of 'therapist and guide; teaching you to understand yourself and other people better […] discovering a lifestyle called Will Power'. London Business Forum's Inspirational Leadership workshops offer timeless lessons for leaders from Shakespeare's Henry V (2013). They promise 'timeless

lessons' from a fictional figure existing over four hundred years ago and state participants need 'no prior knowledge of the play or author, the characters and their situations will take us on a journey that is self-explanatory' (Olivier, 2013, p.8).

This universalisation of Shakespeare's plays not only suggests providing an universalisation of themes, issues, and characters in the plays, but also offers up challenges for anyone wishing to adapt Shakespeare's plays. The sanctity of Shakespeare's work and the cultural taboo in presuming to alter them (Fischlin & Frontier, 2014) means that, although long dead and 'Shakespeare lies outside copyright protection, a moral right is still involved by conservative critics on his behalf' (Fischlin & Frontier, 2014, p.6).

Shakespeare has become the embodiment of literary tradition and a sign of the 'ultimate form of literary achievement' and as such Shakespeare's works are often negotiated via his 'virtual cultural presence'. Whether as a literary figure or as a 'sublime touchstone against which cultural identity is measured, however problematically' (Fischlin & Frontier, 2014, p.9). This version of Shakespeare ignores any external influences upon Shakespeare's work, stands against the ideas that 'Shakespeare himself was as guilty as theft, as any author, [which is] typical of Renaissance compositional practice' (Fischlin & Frontier, 2014, p. 9). This places Shakespeare as 'the ultimate guarantor of 'greatness' and forces forward a 'national identity' so clearly linked with colonial and imperial imperatives, that Shakespeare functions to disseminate essential Englishness' (Fischlin & Frontier, 2014, p. 11). This begs the question, is Shakespeare universal, or do we need him to be?

In the application of universality there becomes a 'glossing over' of cultural difference, contextual influences, and human diversity to suggest that Shakespeare holds

‘universal powers’ that speak to ‘all people, all communities, all cultures’ (Irish, 2008, p.8). Through a universalising discourse, we are told to engage with Shakespeare’s work for what it may help an individual achieve (e.g. psychological healing, business leadership strategies etc.), and are afforded an ‘unreflective affirmation’ of a range of ideals found in the play’s universalising powers. As Bristol argues ‘we may say that neither Shakespeare himself nor his contemporaries knew the ‘great Shakespeare’ that we know today’ (1996, p.11), and our current versions and understandings of Shakespeare’s work can be fraught with assumptive and taken-for-granted beliefs.

To use the term ‘for all time’ can be regarded as ‘absurd’ and simply plays into the hands of those powerbrokers who want Shakespeare to be ‘culture-reinforcing and morally uplifting’ (Hawkes, in Kermode, 1993, p.9-10). Therefore, the thesis suggests that simplistic assumptions caused by a universalising discourse must be subverted, ‘because they reproduce the reductive hegemonies (cultural practices and beliefs that dominate in any particular society) they are seeking to overturn or sustain’ (Fischlin & Frontier, 2014, p.12). For an applied theatre project this may not offer the most beneficial or useful lessons for its participants, as applied theatre’s aims and intentions are predominantly concerned with promoting diversity and offering the marginalised a voice, which a universalising discourse potentially counteracts. Any cultural work, including that of Shakespeare’s ‘has to be studied in its specifics to see how political issues play out within, and are offered by that work’ (Fischlin & Frontier, 2014, p.5). Therefore the thesis looks to suggest the use of literary and theatrical tools, such as new historicism and Brecht’s historicisation, in order to subvert this universalising discourse (see 1.2.4).

1.2.2 Cultural values

It is important to acknowledge that Shakespeare's work is often connected to an 'idiomatic sense of cultural success and widespread notoriety' (Bristol, 1996, p.0). This is because 'suppliers of cultural goods have been skilful at generating a social desire for products that bear his trademark and in creating merchandise to satisfy that desire' (Bristol, 1996, p.0), particularly in relation to the play's universal appeal, cultural power and 'greatness' which has been 'promoted' and 'advertised' to its audience. This is connected to 'how the value of Shakespeare's work has been sustained and transmitted over time' (Bristol, 1996, p.viii). In this way, Shakespeare is believed to be assigned with 'conventional value' and it deemed as 'essential to the 'progress of this civilisation'' (Bristol, 1996, p.8). Therefore, Shakespeare's work is not simply 'universal' or 'timeless' but helpful in promoting values of an idealised civilisation.

When the continuous and often compulsory use of Shakespeare's work is applied the results are twofold. Firstly, it perpetuates the 'snobbery that to be clever or important or accepted you have to know some Shakespeare' (Irish, 2008, p.10), which hinges around the fact that people 'are conditioned to accept that such brushes with greatness, like some potent but ill tasting medicine, are good for them' (Adams,1989, p.2). This is a concept that appears to have endured since the Victorian Era. Then the belief was that 'exposure to high culture like Shakespeare made you a better person' (Widdowson, 1981, p.5). Governmental papers have also followed this narrative and often regard 'Shakespeare as our greatest English writer'- the tone of a range of papers appears to promote the notion that 'exposure to good literature makes for a good citizen' (Newbolt Report, 1921: Newsom Report, 1963). The Newsom Report (1963, p.155) in fact explicitly states that:

> ‘All [participants], including those of very limited attainments, need the *civilizing experience* of contact with great literature, and can respond to its *universality*’.[1]

This offers a direct assertion that to study, watch, or participate with Shakespeare’s work provides an engagement with elite and high art which equates to being a better and more acclimatised individual (Dobson, 2011, p.7). This is a slavish subjugation that allows Shakespeare’s work to take on a status that pervades the value of the work itself. It also implies that assumptive uses of Shakespeare’s work are relevant amongst a range of practices and environments because the work itself equates to an unquestioned excellence.

Secondly, Shakespeare’s work is a ‘cultural good’ and ‘through hype, aggressive commercial promotion, and even relentless encouragement from parents, successive generations promote value in Shakespeare’ (Bristol, 1996, p.ix). As a symbol of cultural worth, Shakespeare’s plays can be used as a means of supporting, rather than resisting the establishment that promotes his work as valuable.

Not only is Shakespeare a term with extraordinary currency and cultural value, but his use has ‘multiple and ambiguous valences, especially in its vernacular usage, where it may also signify privilege, exclusion, and cultural pretension’ (Bristol, 1996, p.ix). Suppliers of the versions of ‘Shakespeare’ we regularly receive often represent the elite and powerful (Bristol, 1996). They exercise their persuasions over a minority who are delivering, presenting, and exploring Shakespeare. Accusations of elitism are relevant, as Irish (2008, p.10) argues:

[1] Although the papers assert ‘great literature’, Shakespeare is currently the only compulsory playwright on the curriculum and has been since the 1990’s

> ‘some feel it is wrong to impose the writings of a white male, whose plays promote questionable values about class and women. Others counter that to deny [people] access to a man generally regarded as the world's greatest playwright was simply reverse snobbery’.

This elitism manifests itself in many forms. It is a society who forces forward worth and value in the form of ‘exclusive culture’. The links to power and privilege often mean those outside of this culture are told of the opportunities in accessing the values and authority found inside Shakespeare’s works. It is also a society motivated by profit-making which governs Shakespeare’s work as a cultural good or service for monetary gain. ‘Shakespeare’ as a profitable brand can often become attached to agenda-based incentives. These are predominantly financial and result in the un-relentless promotion of his works as valuable in order to serve a range of ulterior purposes, suggesting that ‘Shakespeare’s strength as a brand has not faltered. In fact, it’s ubiquitous’ (Boston, 2016). Whether for purposes of elitism or financial gain there remains the need to be aware of the politics that Shakespeare’s works can be bound to. This aspect of the thesis is motivated by the question ‘can such artefacts actually widen and enhance democratic participation in our public culture, or do they just reinforce acrimonious social division?’ (Bristol, 1996, p.xii). This area of interest bridges the gap between applied theatre’s intentions for using Shakespeare’s work for transformative purposes versus where complex cultural values may take precedence.

1.2.3 Character identification

It is often claimed that Shakespeare’s subject matter is held to be a means to help self-development and transformation, providing a resource to facilitate ‘the confrontation with self’, which to the modern era, sounds very much like self-discovery’

(Cox, 1992: Hughes, 1993: Murray, 1996: Jacobs, 2008: Walsh, 2012: Fitzsimmons, 2017).

In a range of applied theatre projects the manner in which ‘self-discovery’ leading to ‘transformation’ is achieved is by being able to identify with, and explore parallels to, the characters in Shakespeare’s plays (Tofteland & Cobb, 2012: Fitzsimmons, 2017). There are a wide range of academics and practitioners who believe in the positive (and often therapeutic) power of interacting with Shakespeare’s characters to achieve individual transformation (Walsh, 2012: Jacobs, 2008: Cox & Thielgaard, 1994: Hughes, 1993: Linklater, 1993: Cox, 1992: see 4.3.2). However, it is important to acknowledge that this can simultaneously mean that the participants are at risk of identifying with complex characters, for instance ‘identifying with a hallucinating murderer given to fits of nihilistic fury and apocalyptic monomania’ (Ko, 2014). The transformative intentions therefore promote two major complications to the practice. Firstly, it brings attention to the ethical difficulties often found in work that aims to transform an individual, potentially causing risk to the participant. Secondly, the work appears to ignore the changes in social, political, cultural and/or historical contexts, and can ‘impose a false and anachronistic coherence onto the set of ‘central energies’ that constitutes the character’ (Worthen, 1997, p.132).

For an applied theatre project, the promotion of character identification can often combine the use of a universalising discourse with the promotion of value found in Shakespeare’s works, in order to achieve transformation. It may also ask for vulnerable individuals to identify with complex characters resulting in a negative outcome as the individuals are too closely connected to the issue, making it difficult to

extricate themselves from it emotionally, therefore complicating their ability to identify opportunities for change.

1.2.4 Historical considerations

There are many practical and theoretical approaches that explore Shakespeare's plays and characters in order to develop greater understandings of, and interactions with his work: from A.C. Bradley's character-based approach, G. Wilson Knight's theme-based reading, to Spurgeon's image clusters (to offer the smallest possible example). This thesis however, is interested in how an historical reading of Shakespeare's plays may help to subvert assumptive interrogations and a universalising discourse that currently interacts with the work. It is currently found that there is a tendency to 'deflect attention from and displace the potentially more relevant social history that underlies the play's original discursive field, for a modern day reading or identification of the work' via a 'timeless universality manifested in being able to illuminate and centre the modern world, but may instead grope about in an increasingly complex and confusing world' (Ko, 2014). To subvert this outcome an historical reading of the play text is appealing.

It is acknowledged that an immediate limitation of an historical reading can be identified in Knights' (1979, pp.226-227) warnings that:

> 'the attraction of the historical or reconstructive procedure is of course that it seems to approach something like a guaranteed meaning – *the* meaning in the minds of an ideal audience contemporary with the plays- and thereby to offer an escape from uncertainty of merely personal interpretation and criticism'.

However, what is not being suggested here is that we can determine for a fact how the plays were received or intended to be received. Instead, the thesis recommends that

the value of historical scholarship in the study of literature is founded in accepting that different meanings for different generations do exist. That generally audiences have different histories and various baggage that may affect their readings of a play. All audience members do not respond the same way to a piece of theatre and this is recognised throughout the thesis and acknowledged within the application of an historical reading of Shakespeare's work. The application of an historical reading to the play is justified in the intention to firstly, keep the participant's at a safe distance from the issue being addressed, looking at history to help focus and concentrate their minds on the opportunity for change and transformation. Secondly, it helps to subvert the assumptive considerations encapsulated in the idea that there exists 'universal powers' within his plays. It is also a recommendation that may allow practitioners to be more aware of the challenges involved in not acknowledging that character motives, themes and beliefs pervasive during the Renaissance period may be very different to those held and understood today, but important in helping to identify opportunities for transformation.

Undertaking an historical reading of the work offers a method in which the works of Shakespeare and their uses within applied theatre are able to react against the cultural systems that surround his encouraged (and often compulsory) use.

Bertolt Brecht (1898-1956) is an important figure in understanding why one would benefit from reading Shakespeare's works historically. His links to applied theatre are also acknowledged (see 2.1). Brecht recommends the technique of historicisation which is a device used to interpret the play as a product of historical development. It acknowledges that different points in history produce different values, behaviours and

opinions. Brecht argues that because present day differs (often substantially) from earlier periods there is a necessity to recognise the work in its original context.

It is in relation to Brecht's concept of verfremdungseffekt that the historical reading of Shakespeare's work becomes coherent.[2] The distancing effect offers attempts to create a cognitive change where the granted is no longer taken-for-granted. By distancing oneself from the issues of today, and reading them through the lessons of yesterday the mind is concentrated on opportunities for change. According to Brecht (in Brecht & Willett, 1992, p.190), '[a] representation that [estranges] is one which allows us to recognize its subject, but at the same time makes it seem unfamiliar'. For Brecht (in Brecht & Willett, 1992, p.190) verfremdungseffekt used alongside historicisation 'keeps impermanence always before our eyes, so that our own period can be seen to be impermanent too'. By stressing the impermanence of social conditions, Brecht explains that change can happen whilst simultaneously discrediting the idea of universalisation. Brecht explains that conditions are created by man and they can be changed by man, through learning and changing things based on looking back to similar things that have happened in history. Once conditions are no longer seen as universal or permanent, but as changeable, the audiences' will say, (in Brecht's words), '[t]his person's suffering shocks me, because there might be a way out for him' (Martin & Bial, 2000, p. 26). Brecht projects that through undertaking historicisation and distance from an issue that said issue can and will change.

Heinemann (1985, p.132) writes that through Brecht's proposition to 'expose the historical bases of Shakespeare's constructions can the authority of those

[2] Verfremdungseffekt: a technique used to make the audience critical about the issues being explored in the work. Distancing techniques are used to alienate the audience from becoming too absorbed in the narrative of the work and instead focus on the issue at the heart of the theatre performance.

constructions be subverted'. The justification for referencing Brecht is therefore appropriate in finding a technique that can help to subvert the assumptive appropriations of Shakespeare's plays and concentrate the participant's mind upon the values that can be uncovered when considering Shakespeare's plays as a product of his time, rather than something that can be universally applied. The combination of Brecht's historicisation and verfremdungseffekt with Shakespeare's plays thus appear complimentary of the purposes of reading the texts with historical implications in mind.

Complimentary of Brecht's theatrical vision for Shakespeare's work, is the literary work of new historicists who are similarily concerned with a reading of Shakespeare's work as a product of history. New historicists aim to understand Shakespeare's work through the context of its own time, comparing this to how the plays have been used in English culture since the seventeenth century (see 1.3.3b). Greenblatt (2000) who co-founded new historicism, offers a method of understanding literature by examining elements in history that 'previous critics have ignored or deemed irrelevant' (Bernstein, 1991). In order to reinterpret Shakespeare's plays by 'constructing closer relationships between play text and history, and exploring topical concerns when current cultural politics are projected onto the past' (Smith, 1986, p.57) new historicists are concerned with exploring opportunities to subvert and contain current understanding of early modern texts through a universalising of the work. This provides a form of cricitism complimentary to the ideas of this thesis.

It is important to establish that the thesis is not suggesting that Brecht's recommendation of historicisation and verfremdungseffekt should be captured in its holitstic entirety, that the theories of new historicists are the only ones through which to interpret Shakespeare's plays, that modernisations of the work are not relevant, or

that those using Shakespeare's works need to present an historically dogmatic version of the plays; but rather that an historical *understanding* of Shakespeare's plays is important in order to explore more thoroughly the transformative opportunities afforded by the work and to subvert the use of a universalising discourse. The recommendation is ultimately concerned with the idea that 'theatre should allow the audience to view the events critically, not merely accept them' (Rossi, 1991, p.57) (which is also a complimentary recommendation in line with applied theatre).

Overall, through four distinct areas of interest, this thesis identifies a desire to explore the challenges of combining Shakespeare's work alongside applied theatre formats, for transformative purposes. The thesis is concerned with undertaking an historical reading of a range of Shakespearean plays to gain an understanding of the political, cultural and historical contexts influencing the work's creation. This will provide an important analytical framework through which to assess whether certain values surrounding Shakespeare's plays have influenced articulations regarding the benefits of the work. The four motivating interests afford the thesis an opportunity to establish distinct parameters for the research and to address the overarching thesis question: *What challenges are faced when combining Shakespeare's work with applied theatre settings, for transformative purposes?*

1.3 Methodology

1.3.1 Research framework

The research framework of this thesis is qualitative, due to the research being predominantly exploratory-based and concerned with how Shakespeare's work has been used amongst varying marginalised communities. By using qualitative materials, a more detailed picture regarding the manner in which a number of communities react

to Shakespeare's texts and applied theatre styles of practice can be established. The thesis is predominantly concerned with how participants and practitioners are placing and articulating the value of their projects. I am, however, aware that there is evidence to support the claim that participant and practitioner evaluations of applied theatre can provide an unreliable measure of the complex purpose of participation and participatory intentions. Chapter 3.1.2 is dedicated to unpicking the challenges and ethical difficulties associated with who is evaluating and measuring the success of the work. It is evident that participant involvement in the evaluation offers a complex range of individuals and/or communities reflecting upon the work, and ethical challenges suggest that is also complicated when the participants are *not* involved in the evaluation process. This thesis does draw upon artist's written claims and other documentation of practice for the main discussion of the case studies (5.6, 6.5, and 7.5). The thesis acknowledges the potential conflict between the use of participants and practitioner's reflections upon the work, and the potential conflicts this can actuate. The thesis simultaneously acknowledges that there is importance in including these reflections within the thesis, and part of the critical discourse analysis will be to unpick these reflections and explore where assumptive and taken-for-granted beliefs about the work may exist. This is a highly appropriate methodological approach and one that has been used amongst a range of academics already studying this field (Jensen, 2014: Balfour, 2004: Bates, 2013: Scott-Douglass, 2007: Trounstine, 2004 & 2007). The time consuming nature of this research means that fewer communities will be studied throughout this thesis.

1.3.2 Research position

An interpretative approach represents the research position for this study, as the thesis is regarded in terms of multiple but relative (Hudson & Ozanne, 1988) areas of analysis to provide a more encompassing consideration of applied practice, Shakespeare's uses, and marginalised communities. The thesis consistently explores the relationship between applied theatre discourse and a particular context (e.g. Prison Theatre, Disability Theatre and Theatre Therapy), and seeks to explore connections between value and ideology and how these are spoken about in reference to the projects specifically. Exploration of similarities and differences into how the practice of applied theatre is being used is considered in relation to three salient communities, offered as uniformed chapters of exploration throughout. The thesis in order to be 'socially constructed rather than objectively determined' (Carson et al., 2001, p.5) seeks specific themes and trends.

From an interpretative approach, the thesis is informed via prior insight into the field 'but presumes that this is insufficient in developing a fixed research design due to a complex, multiple and unpredictable nature of what is perceived as reality' (Hudson & Ozanne, 1988, p.518). The thesis therefore remains open to new knowledge and lets the findings develop with the help of continuous exploration of the field.

The advantages of an interpretative approach are that it affords greater consideration of the uses of Shakespeare's work and deeper interrogation of the participant's reflections surrounding their engagement with the practice; rather than a presentation of outside theories dictated by the researcher. The benefits of this are founded in the opportunities to reflect upon honest and immediate reactions to the work from the viewpoint of the participants and practitioners engaged with the work and operating

within the field. It also allows for a complimentary research position in line with the aims of an applied theatre format, which asks for a voice to be given to the participant engaging with the work.

An interpretative position is an appropriate approach for analysing the focus area of this thesis, as it is predominantly concerned with looking at the purpose of social action through the practice of applied theatre and how the practitioners and participants of a range of applied theatre projects, delivered in marginalised communities, talk about their work. This 'critical lens' helps the thesis to identify the undertones of political discourse in order to discover the challenges that ensue when using Shakespeare's work in applied theatre settings, and for transformative purposes.

Ultimately, an interpretative position allows the thesis to:

1) Establish associations between discourse and context which is explored by undertaking an analysis of different areas of applied theatre practice.

2) Bring to light the ideological and power relations which may be concealed within the work.

3) Provide details of case study examples and their use of Shakespeare's work amongst marginalised communities and within a range of applied environments.

Overall, the research position for the thesis attempts to be holistic to, and encompassing of, a range of often diverse areas of practice and is complimentary of exploration into a field concerned with promoting participation and transformation.

1.3.3. Research methods

In order for the thesis to address its main propositions and undertake analysis of the three main areas of interest, the thesis uses two distinct research methods: discourse analysis and new historicism.

Discourse analysis allows the thesis to consider:

1) The inherent risks, challenges and complications bound to applied theatre projects, and its desire to achieve transformation and levels of active participation.

2) The uses and articulated benefits of three applied and community-based projects, and how they hope to achieve transformation through encounters with the works of Shakespeare.

New historicism offers a literary method that affords:

3) An historical discourse from which to analyse Shakespeare's plays in order to subvert the universalising discourse often used when applying Shakespeare's work and to acknowledge any important political and cultural values important at the time in which the plays were created that are different to the values that operate today.
4) An opportunity to distance the participants from the issue addressed in the work, in order to more safely identify opportunities for transformation.

1.3.3a Critical discourse analysis

Adopting a Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) approach in line with Fairclough, and supplemented with Foucault's work and philosophy around power and knowledge, will

afford exploration of broader discourses and concepts relevant to this field of practice. Foucault is important in the chapters dealing with incarceration and therapy and its use of power, as he wrote extensively about these areas of discourse. However his work is not a system of ideas and a 'lack of system causes difficulties for discourse theorists' (Mills, 2004, p.21), and because Foucauldian discourse is said to be too broad with a general lack of explicit techniques for researchers to follow (Morgan, 2010), his work is beneficial in supporting analysis, however is not presented as the overriding research approach for this thesis. CDA instead is a realist approach which offers the thesis a method in which to 'intimate links between language and social-institutional practices […] and the need for these disciplines to engage with issues of power and hegemony in a dynamic and historically informed manner' (Fairclough, 1995, p.vii).

The thesis is relational as it considers communities and their social relations and marginalisation. It is dialectical in its consideration of the ideas and opinions on how Shakespeare's work provides the ability to help communities transform. The thesis 'entails working in a 'transdisciplinary' way through dialogue with other disciplines and theories which are addressing processes of social change' (Fairclough, 2015, p.1) found when considering the three areas of practice that fall under applied theatre's umbrella term. The method is complimentary to this thesis as it engages with 'dialogues between disiplines, theories and frameworks which take place in doing analysis and research and is a source of theoretical and methodological development within the particular disciplines, theories and frameworks in dialogue' (Fairclough, 1995, p.4).

Using Fairclough's approach the thesis will focus upon identification of discourse at the macro, meso and micro level. Through a consideration of the context of applied theatre, marginalised communities, the transformative principle, and active levels of participation, the thesis considers practice at the macro level. At the meso level the thesis considers the challenges of the work in relation to context and intended purposes before moving onto a consideration of the three areas of specific practice and their ensuing challenges. Finally, at the micro level the thesis explores the discourses expressed by the selected theatre companies, outlining their articulated benefits and justifications behind undertaking the work.

In line with Fairclough's CDA the thesis compliments the focus on research that considers the processes of social change. By exploring social change the thesis includes the consideration of 'social practices […] how social practices are articulated together in the constitution of social fields, institutions and organizations, and in the relations between fields, institutions and organisations' (Fairclough, 2015, p.4). This is included in the consideration of three salient areas of practice: prison theatre, Disability theatre and theatre therapy in constitution with the language of the participants, practitioners, supporters and funders. It aims to:

> 'analyse, describe, interpret and proffer explanations of how practices are discursively accomplished, suggesting a way of clarifying the ideologically informed bases of the purposes and methods of the professions themselves' (Fairclough, 1995, p.viii).

The focus of the thesis in its entirety is about how 'participants construe their worlds, and how they reflectively seek to change aspects of such worlds', which offers an insight into practitioners and participants 'intent on pursuing a reflective and critical agenda' (Fairclough, 1995, p.viii).

A large amount of practitioners in the field of ‘healthcare, social work, language and literacy education, restorative justice, political agency, have come to rely on [Fairclough’s] formulations and theorising’ (Fairclough, 1995, p.viii), and the choice of CDA as a tool to aid analysis within this thesis appears justified and complimentary to the research intentions presented throughout.

1.3.3b New Historicism

New historicism is the main literary method used throughout this thesis. The importance of this method is founded in how it ‘situates the literary text in the political situation of its own day’ (Barry, 2017, p.184). It is interested in the historical situation of Shakespeare’s time. The methodology follows the logic that literature and history occupy the same area and should be given a similar weighting when analysing, evaluating and interpreting a play text ‘within the context of the history of the author’ (Barry, 2017, p.184). The method subverts the assumption ‘that texts had some universal significance and essential ahistorical truth to impart, [and] reads literary texts as material products of specific historical conditions’ (Brannigan, 1996, p.3).

New historicism is aligned to the considerations of this thesis that explicitly explore and challenge the concept of universal truth and rationality. Thinkers that hold the notion that Shakespeare’s work offers an engagement with universal themes, ideas and concepts, overlook opportunities for interpretation as the universal is offered as an unchanging truth. The new historicists reject the universalising discourse and emphasise that literary texts are influenced by biographical, social and historical contexts. They suggest that literary texts should be rarely explored in isolation to their historical contexts. They argue that ‘history matters and reinforce a shared desire to

resist ‘presentism’’ (Cochrane, 2015, p.5). New historicists do not favour history over modernity, but rather seek an:

> ‘approach to the past which asks present-minded questions but refuses present-minded answers; which concerns itself with the traditions but allows for their continual reinterpretation; and which notes the importance of unintended consequences in the history of historical writing as well as the history of political events’ (Bratton, 2003, p. 14).

It is acknowledged that the method of new historicism can be criticised for not paying close enough attention to the actual text, however this is far from the intention of this thesis, as demonstrated in the chapters that present Renaissance readings of a range of Shakespeare’s plays. The limitations of the research method can also be found in questioning the grounds in which history is written (Bratton, 2003), suggesting the risk when using records of early England ’as self-verifying facts’ (Bratton, 2013, p.4). The thesis acknowledges the limitations that are connected to new historicism, but uses the research method to help subvert the universalising discourse, which often offers hasty generalisations in relation to experiences and even existence itself. New historicism is to be used as a critical method of interpretation which links the historical events of the Renaissance era to Shakespeare’s plays. It is used in order to highlight how the play texts are written about a time specific to history.

The intention here is not to suggest that because a text is influenced by a particular time period, it is therefore of no use to a modern audience. Contrarily, the thesis is suggesting that lessons of the past may be of importance to the reader, particularly in an applied theatre setting, where the participant can be safely distanced from the implications of the issue whilst simultaneously offering opportunities to explore transformation and change.

The anti-establishment views of Foucault offer discursive formulations which influence this discourse in relation to understanding, knowledge and truth. New historicism reflects Foucault's notion that historical discourse is important in highlighting the concepts, oppositions and hierarchies which may have been dominant products and propagators at a given time in history. For Foucault history highlights a dominant ideology, which may be very different to the ideologies we understand and action today and are therefore important to consider.

New historicism underscores the impermanence of a universalising discourse. It highlights how beliefs in our time may be different to that of a Renaissance audience, through reflecting analysis through the literature's own historical context. The discourse is important as 'new historicism insistently raises the question of whether dominant forces in culture are essentially producing their own versions of 'the real' (Harpham, 1989, p. 360). New historicism therefore acknowledges and embraces the ideas that, as times change, so will our understanding of great literature, making universality redundant.

Ultimately the methodology compliments the aims of the thesis and the desire to subvert moments of universalisation, and offers the participant a safe distance from the issues the play(s) may present. It further aligns with Brecht's recommendations of historicisation and verfremdungseffekt, and is a literary method used by a range of Shakespearean scholars (including Greenblatt, 2000: Orgel, 2002, Bratton, 2003: Gurr, 2012, Parvini, 2012: Cohrane, 2015).

1.3.4 Research collection techniques

This explorative thesis uses a combination of different research collection techniques. These techniques will afford an exploration into the applied theatre sector,

Shakespeare's uses in applied settings, and the challenges that can be found within this work.

Literature review: The literature review surveys extant literature on this topic, exploring and critically analysing publications that currently comment upon Shakespeare's use within applied theatre. Most of the literature can be regarded as secondary literature as it represents reviews and articles surveying Shakespeare projects in applied settings. However some of the literature can also be seen as primary sources written by academics and practitioners who have actually conducted and analysed their own project(s) within the field. Within the review this is differentiated as *where* Shakespeare exists within applied settings (primary research) and *why* Shakespeare is seen as beneficial within applied settings (secondary research).

The thesis uses literature from across the fields of humanities and social sciences. This decision was partly pragmatic, 'as in applied theatre the social dimension is as important as its artistic dimension' (Arendsen, 2014, p.13), but also because in the context of applied theatre little is written about in terms of the contradictory values and cultural interests Shakespeare's work may help to preserve (Arendsen, 2014). Therefore, the thesis draws upon explorations into different marginalised environments and their subsequent challenges in order to support the overall assessment of this practice. The thesis acknowledges that drawing upon previously published claims and evaluations of the benefits of Shakespeare's use in applied theatre can be unreliable. Although the literature review may be seen to offer a limitation in its reliance upon artist's written claims and other documentation of practice in discussions about previously published material that addresses this field of study, the claims are important to interrogate as part of the critical discourse analysis. It will

allow for an unpicking of how artists in the field regard and review the work, explore important and potentially continuous claims associated with the work, and will highlight through discourse any limitations in current practice. The literature simultaneously attempts to be more encompassing of previous investigations into this field and draws upon resources that are peripheral to the practice in texts dedicated to psychology or literary analysis for instance. This widens the research and allows for academic interrogations to also be included within the review. The literature review is important to the thesis in revealing investigations that are similar to my own, showing how other researchers have handled this material, and provoking important questions in regards to how I define the issues being addressed.

Literary analysis and historical scholarship: The thesis uses literary and historical analysis to interpret understandings of how history may inform the readings of a range of Shakespeare's plays. Chapters 5.4, 5.5, 6.4 and 7.4 consider *Measure for Measure, Macbeth, Richard III, Henry VI Part One and Two,* and *Hamlet.* This allows the thesis to establish a dialogue between Shakespeare's plays and the history that informed them (see 1.2). All of the references to Shakespeare's plays made throughout this thesis are taken from Craig, W.J. (1991) *Shakespeare's Complete Works* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Case studies: All areas of research are then applied to a range of specific case studies in order to explore the work from a practical perspective. As Nicholson states 'without theory, I have found that even the most reflexive of practice gets stuck and becomes repetitive, just as theory can become bafflingly abstract without practice' (2005, p.15).

The case studies explored throughout the thesis allow for a detailed analysis of Shakespeare's use in specific applied theatre settings. They intend to explore the missions, aims and goals of a range of applied theatre companies that use Shakespeare's plays, in order to understand how they theorise their own work. The thesis examines the company's own understanding of their work and the role of Shakespeare's work within it, and reflects on the strategies employed in order to realise various projects that participate with Shakespeare's plays. The thesis looks at various companies employing Shakespeare's work by examining their mission statements, aims, processes and outcomes. The case studies intend to provide an account of the uses that Shakespeare's work is 'put to' in applied theatre settings by examining the companies' own understanding of their work and the role of Shakespeare's plays within it.

A methodological choice is made which focuses on the study of existing published materials rather than undertaking, for example, ethnographic or empirical research (such as interviews) with the project's participants or practitioners. This is mostly because the majority of the information needed to inform the thesis is already published and recorded, but also because the practitioners of the work are much better placed to undertake interviews with the participants to whom they have dedicated elongated periods of time. The thesis looks at transformation for participants engaging with applied theatre and therefore 'these aims and the hope of achieving an improvement in people's lives will be held by the participants and the practitioner' (Khutan, 2014, p.16). I reiterate and acknowledge the potential conflict that the use of participants and practitioner's reflections upon the work can actuate (see 1.3.1).

In relation to the complicated ethical considerations surrounding projects of this nature, undertaking personal interviews with the companies and their participants would have proved ethically problematic. It would not have been ethically appropriate to personally undertake such interviews as I would not have been able to afford or have been afforded a long term developmental approach through which to conduct the interviews. Therefore evaluation of the work is from a critical and reflexive approach. The thesis in this way is based on non-intrusive research methods as the most appropriate format when working with vulnerable populations of people that I personally have no consistent interaction with. This means that there is no intrusion or interruption for the participants and there is minimal impact upon their work. Other material such as published sources, literature reviews and an exploration of case studies are just as useful for the purpose of this thesis 'because measures are non-disruptive, inexpensive and safe, they are ideal for longitudinal studies conducted over a period of time' (Kellehear, 1993, pp.5-6).

Overall, a triangulation of appropriate research methods is used throughout in order to include a more encompassing exploration of the goals of this thesis.

1.4 Thesis structure

Chapter two sets out the parameters and context for the thesis. It provides a background for readers in reference to applied theatre generally. It works to explore the desire to achieve transformation and active levels of participation within marginalised communities. It asks *what are the definitions, history, concepts and theories of applied theatre?*

Chapter three explores the challenges inherent within the form. The focus at this point surrounds the aim of transformation, active participation and marginalisation. It

questions: *what are the ensuing challenges for applied theatre when attempting to achieve transformation and participation?*

Chapter four provides the literature review for this thesis and focuses upon some of the most relevant publications that address the topic of Shakespeare's use in applied theatre by exploring running themes and trends found in discussions about Shakespeare's use in applied settings. The review is broken into: Amateur Shakespeare, Applied Shakespeare, Community Shakespeare, Shakespeare in penal settings, Shakespeare in therapeutic settings, and Shakespeare in Disability settings. The chapter asks *where is Shakespeare's work used as a tool in applied theatre settings and why is Shakespeare's work regarded as a beneficial addition to this area of practice?*

Chapters five to seven, aim to explore the history of theatre within each marginalised community, the challenges of theatre within this community and the history of Shakespeare's use within this community. The chapters then move into a Renaissance reading of a range of Shakespeare's plays that can potentially be seen to be connect to each area of marginalisation; *Measure for Measure* and *Macbeth* in relation to prisons, *Richard III Henry VI part one and two* in relation to Disability, and *Hamlet* in relation to therapy. Each chapter concludes by undertaking an analysis of three salient theatre companies, currently working in the UK, who use Shakespeare's works in order to engage with marginalised communities; the Education Shakespeare Company in relation to prisons, Blue Apple Theatre Company in relation to Disability, and the Combat Veteran Players in relation to therapy. Culminatively, these chapters ask: *What challenges might each community face when combining Shakespeare with the intentions of applied theatre?*

Chapter eight represents the main provocations of practice for the thesis. It draws together findings from the Renaissance readings of Shakespeare's plays with provocations of practice for practitioners who may wish to use Shakespeare's work as a tool for transformation. The chapter asks: *what are the main provocations of practice?*

Chapter Nine represents the conclusion of the thesis and asks: *What does the key contribution to knowledge tell us about Shakespeare's use in applied settings?* The conclusion also reflects upon some of the limitations to this study, and identifies recommendations/suggestions for further research.

Chapter Two: The context of applied theatre

This chapter aims to explore the intentions of applied theatre by investigating some of the prevalent contexts and theories surrounding the field. The chapter will define the form and explore the important discourses intrinsic to the thesis, raising awareness of applied theatre's definitions, histories, theories, concepts and influences, particularly touching upon the work of Moreno, Brecht, Friere and Boal. The thesis moves onto defining marginalised communities, transformation and active participation, so that the components of this format of theatre are clarified, particularly in relation to how they are understood and employed throughout this thesis. The chapter sets out the overarching parameters for the thesis.

The questions that will help define the context of the field are:

- What is the definition of 'applied theatre'?
- What is the history, concepts and theories of applied theatre?
- How does applied theatre attempt to achieve transformation?
- How does applied theatre attempt to capture levels of 'active participation'?
- How does applied theatre practice define 'marginalised communities'?

2.1 Defining applied theatre: its history, concepts and theories

It is argued that the term 'applied theatre' does not often occupy a definitive disciplinary field and can contain 'as many contradictions as it does commonalities' (Kramer, Chamberlain, McNamara et al, 2004, p.90). Therefore the continuous debate surrounding the definition of applied theatre (Jackson, 2007: Thompson, 2006:

Neelands, 2006: Nicholson, 2005: Taylor, 2003) ‘serves only to demonstrate how terminologies overlap, creating a complex territory of ever shifting interpretation, inference, competing genealogies and ideologies, that derive from similar yet distinctive vocabularies’ (Balfour, 2009, p.3).[3] Mainly this is due to the culturally expansive aspects of this form of practice which provides it with various titles and histories and the ‘broad expanse of the work means that while general philosophical characteristics may be identified and discussed, specific conclusions and definitions will remain elusive’ (Balfour, 2009, p.5).

Surrounding applied theatre are wide groups of practitioners and academics who debate the definition, form and purpose of the work. It is described as a field mainly focused on asking questions rather than delivering answers (Taylor, 2003), and is a growing form of collective theatre (Thompson, 2003, p.13). It involves debate and believes in the importance of transformation in difficult environments.

The etymology of applied theatre can trace its roots back to the Greek Chorus where theatre had an ‘historic role in society as providing a relatively safe way of talking back to power’ (Prendergast & Saxton, 2009, p.17). In modern Western theatre, playwrights and practitioners ‘offer a theatre that affords social criticism, debate and potential revolutionary action’ (Prendergast & Saxton, 2009, p.17), which draws focus to social and political issues in an attempt to promote education, transformation and change. This theatre is not only about exploring theatre in an alternative manner, but looking alternatively at theatre and its ability to be presented as a form of social and political education. In this respect, the emergence of the form is indebted to the pioneering educationalists who urged people to raise essential questions about their social

[3] Jackson (2007, p.10) defines genealogies as a method that ‘looks for emergence rather than evolution’.

situation and circumstances aiming to ‘democratise processes of learning’ (Nicholson, 2005, p.8).

J.L. Moreno (1889-1974, Psychodrama), Bertolt Brecht (1898-1956, Lehrstruke and Epic Theatre in the early 20th century) Paulo Freire (1921-1997 Pedagogy of the Oppressed 1970), and Augusto Boal (1931-2009, Theatre of the Oppressed 1979) are regarded as the forerunners of applied theatre practice and have all inspired practitioners work in applied theatre due to their collective notion that pedagogy could address issues of social and political concern, by ‘embracing a position of critical consciousness’ (Landy, 2012, p.xix). They recognised the shift in an aesthetic understanding of theatre, its placement outside conventional theatre venues, the dividing line between traditional and new theatre, and the ability theatre has to promote change.

Moreno (1983) articulates ideas about applied theatre in his development of the ‘theatre of spontaneity’. His teachings epitomised the social aspects of applied theatre work through his establishment of the use of drama as therapy and ‘his use of theatre patterns of role reversal, alter ego, role playing, and role simulation was the beginning of his development of a theory of embodiment and enactment’ (Fox, 1987, p.xiii), used to confront and deal with a psychological issue. In this way he promotes the intentions of applied work that seeks to engage its audience in the benefits of theatre, believing in learning through encounter.

Applied theatre also leans ‘on the politics and aesthetics of Brecht whose theatre promoted distance between passion and reason, actor and audience […] where the goal is revolutionary and the means to the end of class struggle’ (Landy, 2012, pp.124-131). Brecht took Marx’s theories of change and applied them to theatre and

‘developed a theatrical aesthetic of performance which examines social contradictions and where and how pressure for change might arise’ (Prentki, 2015, pp.17). His concerns were predominantly with the social and political, and both his plays and theatrical vision are concerned with distancing the audience in order to achieve change (see 1.2.3).

Freire is perhaps the one influence of applied theatre not directly associated with theatre itself. His pedagogy of the oppressed was concerned with the importance of education to promote change. He encouraged learners to engage in the sharing of ideas, and invented anti-authoritarian approaches to learning. Against ‘banking education’ (where learners are told to receive and memorise information) Freire favoured conscientizacao or critical consciousness, which takes into account personal feelings and emphasises real life experiences and ‘this emphasis on the real has resonated with drama practitioners working with marginalised groups across the world’ (Nicholson, 2005, p.42).[4] Therefore, Freire’s influence is particularly profound. He provides the philosophical basis for Boal’s work and remains a powerful presence within a range of applied theatre practice today.

Boal established a system which combined political citizenship with theatrical practice in acknowledgement to his mentor Freire and his theoretical mentor Brecht. His theatre was known as ‘Legislative Theatre’ which:

> ‘aimed to encourage increased participation in the legislative process by using a range of drama strategies designed to elicit opinion about the issues of the day, to stimulate political debate and find practical solutions to everyday problems. Legislative Theatre uses theatrical techniques to create concrete and specific socio-political impact, asking participants to address the oppression they face’ (Nicholson,

[4] Conscientizacao: a term coined by Paulo Friere in regards to the notion of developing a critical awareness of one’s social reality through reflection and action.

2008, p.25).

The collective intentions of the practitioners highlight major advances in the applied theatre movement and solidify clear developments to the vision relative to this field of work. Although it is clear that ‘each paved the way to a different outcome when it comes to distinguishing the form of applied theatre’ (Obermueller, 2013, p.6), the commonality in their work is that they were’ interested in engaging their audiences in the work of theatre to solicit education and change’ (Obermueller, 2013, p.7). While Moreno and Boal were working with groups and individuals, ‘Brecht sought to break the barrier of stage and audience’ (Obermueller, 2013, p.6), and Freire attempted to establish the importance of critical consciousness through a pedagogical encounter.

Today, the way in which we are interpreting applied theatre; its forms, theories, complexities, and practises, is often debated and this can result in applied theatre being a contested umbrella term for this type of work. However, with much development into the study and practice of applied theatre the term is now much more established and can be seen ‘to provide an overarching concept which encompass[es] a wide array of community-based theatre practices […] There is now a promulgation of accompanying text and academic writing on applied theatre as a discipline’ (Balfour, 2010, p.1), which suggests that applied theatre is an established term, used by theatre practitioners and educationalists in order to explain their work (Prentki, 2015: Nicholson, 2005: Thompson, 2003).

It was during the late 1990’s that the term applied theatre ‘drew attention among theatre practitioners and academics, all of whom looked beyond traditional theatre expressions’ (Gjaerum, 2013, p.1). Gjaerum (2013, p.1) ‘undertook interviews with

Nicholson, Thompson and Jackson, who all stated the term applied theatre somehow came into use during 1996-1999 at a conference, though no one seemed to remember exactly when or by whom'. In 1999-2000 applied theatre was cemented as 'an established form through the opening of research centres such as the Centre for Applied Theatre at The University of Manchester and the Griffith University in Brisbane, Australia' (Gjaerum, 2013, p.1).[5] Balfour (2010, p.56) explains that currently:

> 'about half a dozen [Universities] focus primarily on Applied, Education or Community Theatre, there are also about thirty to thirty-five courses worldwide that have an element of applied theatre/drama/performance as part of a broader undergraduate Drama or Theatre programme [….] with a number of specialist Masters programmes that [also] exist in the field'.

In many ways, the importance of applied theatre work has 'emerged through the academy, as a way to provide an overarching concept to […] community based theatre practice' (Balfour, 2010, p.57), which not only cements applied theatre as a term but also as a valued and important field of study.

When the term gained currency and academics began writing and theorising about this type of work, common amongst any explanation of the features of applied theatre was its existence in non-traditional theatre spaces. This form of 'theatre is *applied* because it is taken out from the conventional mainstream theatre house into various settings in communities where many members have no real experience in theatre form' (Taylor in Prendergast & Preston, 2009, p.4). Therefore applied theatre operates beyond the boundaries of theatre buildings and responds to a number of social and

[5] Griffith University was one of the pioneering Universities to establish programmes that studied applied work which 'grew out of the strengths of the team headed by John OToole, with a strong orientation to drama education, and it is still part of the Faculty of Education, rather than Arts and Humanities' (Balfour, 2010, p.57).

educational contexts (Thompson, 2003).

Applied theatre also speaks to the purpose of several dramatic forms used in the various contexts of 'education, social action and therapy' (Landy, 2012, p.xx). It is theatre that is often used:

> 'in conjunction with other labels and interrelated theatre movements such as […] drama education and theatre in education, theatre in health education, theatre for development, theatre in prisons, community theatre, heritage theatre and reminiscence theatre' (Nicholson, 2005, p.2).[6]

Each of these forms and movements have their own theories, debates and specialised practices and what is important about her definition is that it provides a comprehensive list of the spaces in which applied theatre exists.

Applied theatre attempts to integrate many disparate forms of theatre and 'what these [varying] art forms share is an interest in working in clearly defined contexts, with and for specific audiences, and in furthering objectives which are not only artistic, but also educational, social and political' (Nicholson, 2005, p.8). This suggests that the term has shifted. It has moved 'from being an umbrella term to a term which refers to a range of particular forms that share common practice' (Khutan, 2014, p.15). The theories and practices of applied theatre arise from these various contexts (Prentki, 2015), and share a desire to take theatre to a multitude of people. Through these different spaces the theatre form is being *applied* by a practitioner to something or someone (marginalised communities, societies and/or individuals). Therefore, as an overarching description, 'applied theatre refers to the practice of different forms of theatre and drama in non-traditional settings and/or with a range of individuals and/or

[6] Theatre for Social Change, Applied Drama, Participatory Theatre, Theatre of the Oppressed etc.

communities' (E-Debate, 2007, pp.90-95).

2.2 Defining 'marginalised'

'Marginalised' is the term used by applied theatre practitioners for communities and individuals who find themselves in 'social situations that may prevent their voice from being heard, or who belong to subaltern communities' (Gramsci in Mayo, 1999, p.118). It is important to establish at this stage, that this is the common and relevant term practitioners of this field use in relation to the communities with which they work (Freebody. et.al, 2018: Thompson, 2012: Prentki & Preston, 2008: Erven, 2002). The word 'marginalised' is not intended as derogatory or offensive but rather a term used to recognise participants who find themselves in excluded situations. Although it is recognised that there may be a better term than 'marginalised', the thesis continues to use the term as a way to align itself closely to the language used by applied theatre practice.

The term implies that 'marginalised groups' are groups of socially excluded people who may experience multiple deprivations such as poverty, exclusion and/or lack of social support. Their future trajectories may be associated with negative outcomes such as reoffending, underachievement, substance misuse, and mental health problems etc. Applied theatre attempts to promote the alternative method of drama and theatre in order to engage socially excluded people. Applied theatre is predominantly concerned with work that attempts to be pro-social and therefore its use of the term 'marginalised' is indicative of the way in which the applied discourse has positioned its participants 'as clients, as patients, as marginalised, as victims, as requiring saviours, as children, as vulnerable, as recovering, as at risk' (Freebody. et.al, 2018, p.9).

The overarching purpose of applied theatre is to address the problems of marginalisation giving marginalised people and communities a voice through positive interactions with theatre. The practice ‘gives allegiance to working with ‘marginalised groups’ and those at vulnerable points in their lives’ (Nicholson, 2005, p.119) and there is growing recognition of inequalities that arise from marginalisation and for people who find themselves in excluded situations. The practice attempts to help transform participants who may find that they are identifying with the implications of the term. The aim is that an interaction with applied theatre may simultaneously help the community to see opportunities for difference, helping to find a way to make change.

2.3 Defining ‘transformation’

The broad research surrounding applied theatre allows for the extrapolation of the key theme of transformation to be uncovered. Claims for the transformative properties of the arts are common and widespread. They represent a significant aspect and central claim to applied theatre, and are clearly mapped alongside the intentions of a wide range of participatory projects. Although the thesis does not aim to take a stance on whether transformation should or should not be the final aim of a project, or whether or not it is a positive goal to have; it does aim to analyse the ways in which academics, workshop delivers and practitioners in the field regard and view transformation, and how transformation is an integral aspect of applied theatre’s purposes.

The transformative aspects of the work is celebrated as an important vehicle to help communities ‘break down the increasing exclusion of marginalised groups’ (Erven, 2001, p.1), to help with the reintegration to a society, to affect the power of social and political change (Nicholson, 2005; Boal, 1995), and to achieve transformation by, with and for the excluded and marginalised (Nicholson, 2005). As applied theatre embraces

such a wide range of theatre forms it is often seen as a very ‘inclusive’ practice (Nicholson, 2015; Landy, 2012; Balfour, 2004) and it ‘can be understood as a theatre practice with an explicit objective. It acts deliberately with institutions, with certain communities and on particular issues’ (Thompson, 2003, pp.173-174) and promotes a progressive intention that identifies a ‘need for change’ and/or ‘transformation’. Theatre becomes a space where ‘new possibilities for human kind can be imagined’ (Taylor in Prentki & Preston, 2009, p.4) and transformation can be achieved. A concise definition of transformation can be characterised as the ‘significant alteration of social structures and cultural patterns through time’ (Harper, 1993, p.4).

The form ultimately holds the desire to engage participants in participatory forms of theatre in order to explore issues, plan actions, and become active participants in their own and their community’s transformation. Participatory communication is important for development and transformation and the work tends to:

> ‘adopt processes and interventions that generate dialogue and collaboration, they are underpinned by the concept of empowerment and expression of voice; and they are concerned with challenging power relations and promoting social change from the bottom-up’ (Haider, McLoughlin & Scott, 2011).

All types of theatre falling under the term of applied theatre articulate themselves as having a central commonality of transformation through social communication and expression. The ‘transformative principle’ (Balfour, 2004) makes claims for social development and personal change through theatrical engagement. There is a slippage between where transformation affects the social and where transformation affects the individual and it is often the case that social and personal benefits are articulated as one and the same which is largely due to the fact that social affects self and vice versa. The thesis will be exploring the strands of transformation both personal and social at

different times throughout the thesis with the acknowledgement that the articulation of achieving transformation can be for the community, individual, both simultaneously (or sometimes for neither at all).

There are many people who are working in applied theatre that 'describe the experience of witnessing personal transformations, and these are often important both in motivating artists and securing funding' (Thornton, 2012b, p.3). Matarasso (1997) lists fifty personal and social benefits all related to transformation, including 'increased confidence and self-worth', 'encouraging adults to take up education and training opportunities, and 'providing a forum to explore personal rights and responsibilities'. Academics such as Kuppers (2007, p.30) supports Matarasso's claim when stating:

> 'For many artists, audience participation, happenings that blurred the boundaries between stages, public and private spaces and installations in public environments become important new principles in creating art experiences, the lure of these activities rest in their perceived transgression.'

Boal speaks of the transformative benefits of theatre that 'enable us to observe ourselves and by doing so discover what is not and imagine what we could become' (Idogho, n.d, p.138). Freire talks about the importance of dialogic education as essential for emancipation, he confirms that 'the heart of the educational transformation is an enabling of a human being to consciously reflect on their actions and then change their behaviour in light of their discoveries' (in Taylor, 2003, p.9). Prendergast & Saxton (2009, p.198) reflect upon the instrumental benefits that can submerge 'the very real power of what art itself can do for the people who engage with it.' Taylor (2003, p.3) talks about transformative encounters that 'act as a *transformative agent* and can help raise awareness of the difficulties that people face, the sense of isolation from the community, and the loose ties which perpetuate and

reinforce the issues and the needs of the community.' Mocair (in Prentki & Preston, 2008, p.156) discusses the benefits in terms of 'enhanced communication and skills, and learning the advantages of dialogue over conflict, and a tolerance to diversity'. Therefore the imagined benefits are vast and cover a wide range of social, economic and personal advantages. The resultant changes can affect everything from population to the economy (Popenoe, 1995).

Applied theatre asserts that the 'transformative principle' is at its core (Balfour, 2009, p.3). It aims to 'utilise social intervention', 'build self-esteem', 'challenge specific behaviours', 'promote new attitudes to health education' and 'work with trauma' (Thompson, 2002: Taylor, 2003: Kramer, O'Toole, Burton & Plunkett, 2004: Chamberlain, McNamara et al. 2004: Bundy, 2006: Balfour & Somers, 2006: Dalrymple, 2006). These aims will remain a focus point throughout the thesis.

2.4 Defining 'active participation'

The desire to achieve active participation means that applied theatre aligns itself closely to the missive of participatory arts and practice, which also seeks to achieve inclusive work through active levels of participation. In this way 'participation is central to and essentialised in theatre and interactive arts' (Taiwo, 201, p.767) and represents a shared intention for a range of participatory practice. A wide variety of practice of practice exists under the banner of participatory arts, and in addition, different people use different language to describe really similar practice and ideas' (Lowe (2011).

At its most general level, participatory art is defined as a practice which 'involves an artist working with at least one other person to take part in a process that the artist has instigated' (Lowe, 2011). This can arrive in many forms, via many focuses and practices and through a wide range of approaches e.g. workshops though to

conversations with members of the public. The spectrum is often captured by referring to the debate between Kester and Bishop. Kester (2004) views the participants in a process of creative enquiry, helping to shape the artistic work, and Bishop (2004), maintains that the material explored by the participant becomes the material which informs the artist's own work (single authored with informed consent).

The thesis is interested in examples of applied theatre practice which fall into the spectrum of participation at the point in which a practitioner seeks to help participants create their own work for the purpose of transformation ('co-authored, between artist and participant with informed consent and on-going negotiation' (Tiller, n.d, p.48)). Although the thesis acknowledges that participatory work will, at one point or another, cover all parts of the participatory spectrum, the case studies selected as part of this thesis may be seen to be more complimentary of Kester's point on the spectrum as it:

> 'gives people the opportunity to explore their own stories and find their own voice within their cultures. It empowers people to represent themselves rather than being represented by others. It provides playful, reflective, critical spaces in which people undertake a shared creative journey with an artist who inspires them, and who is also learning and developing along the way' (Lowe, 2011).

For practitioners of applied theatre specifically, the work of Boal remains the archetype for defining the parameters of participation between participant and theatre. For Boal, participation affords the opportunity to 'reformulate the performer-spectator relationship in order to invite a more actively engaged and involved audience' (Reason, 2015). The establishment of roles and terms such as spect-actor and the joker represent the extent to which practitioners and members of the audience are expected

to participate with theatre.[7] The purpose of Boal's work is that the spectator takes on the role of actor and invades the character and the stage. Boal (2000, p.xxi) explains:

> 'By taking possession of the stage, the spect-actor is consciously performing a responsible act. The stage is a representation of the reality, a fiction. But the spect-actor is not fictional. He exists in the scene and outside of it, in a dual reality. By taking possession of the stage in the fiction of theatre he acts: not just in the fiction, but also in his social reality. By transforming fiction, he is transformed into himself'.

Thus active participation remains at the heart of Boal's work in order to achieve the spectator's practical interaction with the work, providing opportunities for change.

There are a range of different levels of engagement that can take place within applied theatre practice. In its simplest form the different levels of participation can be separated into examples of participation that seek audience interaction where the audience are required to operate as an 'active spectator', and/or examples of participatory theatre that require an active audience who are simultaneously required to operate as an 'active performer'. In order to achieve active participation, 'a move from the spectator role to that of performer should take place' (White, 2013, p.19). Thyagarajan (2002, p.14) names this as 'Inner Frames' that show:

> 'two kinds of theatre that exist- theatre that is observed (portrayed) and theatre that is involvement (participation). Both forms can be useful in development but the second has an additional advantage of a greater potential for a high level of participation in the theatre experience'.

[7] Spect-actor is a term created by Boal to describe those engaged in Forum Theatre, referring to the dual role of spectator and actor when observing and creating dramatic work.

In forum theatre, the Joker is the link between the actors and audience. They keep the action going in dramatic performances, and allow the participants to question the action being presented and the issues being addressed.

As applied theatre is predominantly ‘based on the idea that exposure to [theatre], and more importantly participation in creative activities, is life enhancing and can promote wellbeing’ (Clift, 2011, p.102), participation often focuses upon work where the participants have explored ideas themselves. This is because it is widely held that unless the participants have ‘experimented and made what they watched their own experience, the learning opportunities will not be maximised’ (Ackroyd, 2001, p.3). Participation therefore offers opportunities to actively reflect, uses the stage as a place to explore issues relevant to a particular community of people, and to explore the possibilities theatre has to promote change and transformation by the participants themselves. In understanding the characteristics of audience participation in interactive performance, communication can be employed as a medium to ‘enable social progression and/or change’. (Cerratto-Pargman, Rossitto & Barkhuss, n.d.)

The definition of ‘active participation’ is therefore threefold, it recognises ‘Inner Frames’ that show that applied theatre benefits from an ‘involved’ audience, it highlights the importance for integral and active participants, and it establishes that ‘participation’ requires elements of active interaction with the work to present and represent communities of people in a range of different settings and environments. The thesis aims to explore what can now be termed ‘involved, integral and active participation’ which links applied theatre and the projects to participatory practice explicitly. In order to select the case studies for this thesis there has been consideration of participatory art and the more specific workings of applied theatre. Case studies ‘active and integral participation’, and allows for investigation and involvement in order to find opportunities for transformation (See 1.3.3).

Summary

From the definition and history of applied theatre work, there are structured characteristics associated with the field and in this way applied theatre can be identified as 'having some clear purpose, overshadow[ing] the entertainment function' (Plotkin, 1997, p.3).[8]

Ultimately, applied theatre:

> 'in all its many guises, is undertaken by those who want to touch the lives of others, who hope that participants and audiences will extend their perspectives of how life is and imagine how it might be different. Although other forms of theatre-making may share these experiences and aspirations, what is emphasised in applied theatre is its concern to encourage people to use the experience of participating in theatre to move beyond what they already know' (Nicholson, 2005, p.166).

Applied theatre therefore encompasses a range of theatre movements, diverse contexts and multiple and often marginalised communities in order to promote transformation and achieve inclusion, participation and progression. It is a 'form with specific objectives, purposes and values. It is eclectic in its attention to pedagogical, social/political and psychological change' (O'Toole, et.al, 20014, p.250)

The chapter has explored important definitions, theories and concepts relevant to the applied theatre practice. The chapters provides an important context to the work,

[8] Structured characteristics associated with the field of applied theatre:

- Focus on multiple perspectives.
- Endings that remains open for questioning.
- Theatre as a close, direct reflection of actual life, with an overt political intent to raise awareness and to generate change.
- A collective approach to creating theatre pieces in which the makers themselves become aware and capable of change.
- Issues of local importance that may or may not be transferable to other communities.
- Audience as an important and active participant in the creation of understanding, and, often, of the action (Prendergast & Saxton, 2009, p.3).

particularly in its consideration of the terms ‘marginalised’, and ‘active participation’. These terms will remain important throughout the thesis, and alongside the interrogation of transformation the findings here will help to inform the chapters that follow, particularly in reference to the case study chapters of this thesis.

Chapter Three: The challenges associated with applied theatre

Although there are a vast range of benefits associated with the form of applied theatre, when exploring applied theatre projects it is important to remain aware that aesthetic, political, and ethical discourse continually interact with the practice and may change the way the intentions and outcomes of the work are viewed/received (Gallagher, 2010: Prendergast & Saxton, 2009: Saebo, 2009: Neelands, 2007: Jackson, 2007: Thompson, 2006: Nicholson, 2005: Ackroyd, 2001). This chapter will draw attention to how applied theatre and its intention to promote transformation and capture active levels of participation can present challenges. This helps to establish a more vigorous awareness of what this type of theatre may be competing against (Haider, McLoughlin & Scott, 2011: Kuppers, 2007: Balfour & Somers 2006: Bundy, 2006: Kramer, Chamberlain, McNamara et al, 2004: Balfour, 2004: Taylor, 2003: Prendergast & Saxton, 1999: Matarasso, 1997: Popenoe, 1995).

This chapter begins with a focus upon interrogating applied theatre in relation to its transformative intentions; identifying the challenges inherent in this field of work. The chapter explores the perspective of transformation, the assessment of transformation, commissioning transformation, the sacrifices made in order to achieve transformation, and the combination of disparate forms of theatre to achieve transformation. The chapter moves onto interrogating applied theatre in relation to active participation, and the challenges that arise when participants are expected to be actively involved in this format of theatre. This covers the scale of participation, and the perspectives that surround active and passive levels of participation.

This chapter addresses the following questions:

- What are the ensuing challenges for applied theatre when attempting to achieve transformation?

- What are the ensuing challenges for applied theatre when attempting to achieve active levels of participation?

This chapter aims to interrogate important challenges inherent within applied theatre work, which may mean the goal of transformation is difficult to achieve, before Shakespeare's work has even been considered as a tool to utilise transformation.

3.1 Interrogating applied theatre in relation to its transformative intention

Academics are divided when it comes to supporting the claims for the transformative power of the arts. More negative interactions with the work suggest that some consider applied theatre and its intentions to guide our actions and change the world, 'does not work- never did, never will' (Kelleher, 2009, p.57), because 'theatre alone cannot achieve any social change. At best it can voice the demands of forces already in motion' (McGrath & Holdsworth, 2002, p.223). These opinions mean that the transformative purposes inherent in applied work can be contested and its characteristics are met with their own challenges. What needs to be remembered is that any form that has the intention of providing and producing social transformation 'needs to be conscious of its orientation within a complex political web, and while it may not always be able to extricate itself from it, at least it needs to be conscious of the implications of inertia or struggle' (Balfour, 2004, p.7).

The research that follows will provide interrogation into the role transformation plays within applied theatre projects considering:

1. From whose perspective the transformation is realised.

2. How the achievement of transformation is assessed and measured.

3. What sacrifices are/were made to achieve transformation.

4. How the transformation might have been commissioned and whose agendas this commission might serve.

3.1.1 The perspective of transformation

Commonly, there appear to be two dominant perspectives that interact with the purposes of transformation: the top-down and the bottom-up approach. Osnes (2013, p.40) offers the definition that:

> 'A top-down perspective assumes that a funding organisation, NGO, or government defines the objectives and subject matter for an applied theatre project and then works for or with a community to achieve their desired change. A bottom-up perspective assumes the subject group defines and acts on its member's self identified needs and aspirations throughout the entire applied theatre process'.

The bottom-up approach tends to represent the favoured approach for applied theatre practice (Baxter & Low, 2017: Barnes, 2014: Jackson & Vine, 2013) and Jackson and Vine (2013, p.56) describe it as being:

> 'built upon grass-roots, sustainable partnerships and relationships wherein both parties can engage in pedagogical and artistic discussions, learning from each other and developing innovative, co-intentional practices, frequently addressing the same challenges, using different but complimentary methods'.

In applied theatre, the bottom-up approach is captured when partners have specialist knowledge of a group/community long before they actually work on the dramatic material, and there are many examples of applied practice where the bottom-up

approach is used (e.g. Living Earth Nigeria Foundation's Community Theatre Initiative in Cross River State, NIE4 Asia, The Laedza Batanani Project).

The top-down approach runs counter to the bottom-up approach which can be ‘curriculum-centred, outcome-driven and funder-controlled’ (Jackson & Vine, 2013, p.58) and can cause challenges to the intentions of achieving transformation. Although the aim of applied work may be to ‘progress’ or ‘transform’ the participant, there is a simultaneous risk that under a top-down approach applied theatre’s transformation is *on* rather than *for* the participants and can instead prove ‘bad, dangerous, damaging, oppressive, poison, disappointing, and propaganda’ (Gallagher, 2010: Saebo, 2009: Jackson, 2007: Neelands, 2007: Thompson, 2006: Nicholson, 2005: Ackroyd, 2001). The top-down perspective suggests that ‘applied theatre, in some cases, actually exacerbates existing problems by inadvertently supporting institutions in power’ (Thompson, 2009, p.118). Often practitioners ‘believe their efforts can help make a change in the world, despite knowing how much distance they have from the problems in which they want to intervene. They want to make a change to a world created out of their heads’ (Wickstrom in Snynder-Young, 2013, p.34). Ultimately top-down messages are at risk of promoting results that participants find difficult to relate to themselves, ‘in this top-down manner the theatre becomes didactic, where messages are put across to audiences, often by practitioners who are not from the community, with no discussion, debate or community participation’ (White, 2013, p.302).

There are two parts to the challenges of a top-down approach. Firstly the top-down perspective is to ‘over-serve the most advantaged people in this country, becoming irrelevant to the many, in favour of the few’ (Jubb in Gardner, 2016). Secondly we impose values that are not always shared or beneficial to a particular community. This

raises bigger questions about the politics of applied theatre, questioning:

> ‘If applied theatre is socially transformative, is it explicit what kind of society is envisioned? If the motive is individual or personal transformation, is it something which is done *to* the participants, *with* them or *by* them? Whose values and interests does the transformation serve?’ (Nicholson, 2015, p.18)

If the perspective of transformation is served by the ‘outsider’ of the community from a top-down perspective, without directly involving the community on the decisions being made for their benefit, a participant may not want to be involved in a project that deems to know them better than they know themselves (Thompson, 2003). There is a further risk that ‘when thinking through the values of applied theatre, it may be well intentioned and generously given, but it may also be an expression of hierarchy, an imposition of values that are not always shared’ (Nicholson, 2005, p.5. See chapter 1.2).

Anne Davis’s 2009 company, *Time Slip*, provides an example of the limitations aggravated by the ‘outsider’. The project used Homer’s *Odyssey* as a prompt and infused improvisation into a care system-which became known as *Shipwrecked* (later the Penelope Project). The company stated that ‘it was clear from early meetings that the title had too many negative connotations for elders, they did not want to engage with a project that negatively captured their situation’ (in Basting, 2009, pp.168-170). In cases such as this, if the practitioner ‘cannot speak for or speak from these fields of reflection and are only ever visitors within the disciplines into which we apply our theatre’ (Thompson, 2003, p.20), the practitioner will hold a limited knowledge of the needs of the community they are working with. The work can therefore be seen as ‘self-serving and imposing, destructive and complicit with agendas that could potentially cause considerable harm to the recipients of the research’ (O’Connor et al,

2009, p.5).

The view of transformation and its realisation amongst communities needs to be carefully considered, as many people have multiple affiliations, needs and values; and one method or model applied by the practitioner may not engage *all* participants at *all* times or may not be transformative to *all* participants involved in the project (Nicholson, 2005). It will be important to remember that depending on the perspective of transformation, it can bring with it a range of fraught complications that make the intentions of applied work vulnerable. The findings here highlight the need for a deeper consideration of how applied projects are promoting transformation as the work may be limited because of the perspective of transformation, especially if it has not been developed in concert with the perspective of the communities for whom the work is aimed. Conditions need to be right, the individual also needs to play a role in the transformation and discussions between the practitioner and participant also need to be collaborative (Thornton, 2012a).

3.1.2 The assessment of transformation

The assessment of transformation gives rise to the growing cultural phenomenon, prevalent today that requests evaluations of work are produced and quality projects are presented. The need to evaluate and measure quality have grown over the past few decades as a fundamental aspect of work that attempts to engage, change and transform individuals. Positively, for any theatrical project to be successful it is important to assess and evaluate the work's quality in order for mistakes to be challenged and changed, and successes to be shared and celebrated, and to explore why and how people are articulating the benefits and limitations of their own work. Therefore, the 'effect' and 'affect' that applied theatre has on people through the terms

'evaluate', 'assess' and 'measure' (Gjaeurum, 2013) is an important area for consideration allowing the thesis to be critically reflective and consider the extent to which the assessment of transformation may present challenges to the work. However, it is also important to acknowledge that 'assessment' is part of a wider social context involved with funding and agenda and as such there are political implications surrounding the need to evaluate projects and provide 'quality work'.

Although evaluating the 'quality of arts as a practice is important because it is often a part of the assessment criteria for granting institutions' (Patton, 2011), the practice of evaluating 'quality' remains subjective. This is further complicated by the fact that 'quality' is tied to complex considerations that have inextricable ties to other longstanding issues in the field including innate perceptions of quality filtered through personal biases, mainstream methods of quality assessment through traditionally problematic practices, and efforts that undermine 'equitable and inclusive' practice (AQM, 2018, p.25). It is also argued that 'quality is only definable in the form of measured outputs and impacts, and furthermore that quality is the sole responsibility of the delivering artists expected to account for it' (AMQ, 2018, p.13). The AQM (2018, p.12) suggests ways in which we can rethink 'quality', stating that 'major steps forward have been taken in how we think about and define quality, and how it can best be achieved'.[9] They provide 'five key insights that challenge the current/conventional approach to quality management' (AMQ, 2018, p.12)[10]. However two limitations

[9] By Arts Council England (Lord et al, 2012), Creative Scotland (Blanche, 2014; Consilium, 2012; Bamford, 2010), Arts Council of Wales (2009) and Artworks Cymru (2016)

[10] '1. The optimum approach to managing quality is a cycle of Continuous Quality Improvement. […] 2. A holistic approach is needed for quality […] in which each stage of a project – from conception through commissioning, preparing, delivering and completing – affects the ultimate quality, not just the creative/ participatory phase […] 3. The only part of quality that can be 'managed' is the conditions. It is not possible to manage for guaranteed outcomes. […] 4. Evidence shows that essential conditions needed to enable quality are often lacking […] 5. Decision makers, sometimes 'far from the room',

remain. Firstly, there is no solid definition of what 'quality' means when creating work with people. When attempting to evaluate 'quality': 'how do we know when we see/feel/hear quality?' (Artworks Cymru). Secondly 'as the arts change and develop, so too does the consensus of what is good or of quality' (Arts Council Wales, 2009) which makes evaluative dialogue not easy to standardise as 'quality' is ultimately a subjective measure. This subjectivity permeates the evaluation process surrounding participatory projects and makes assessment of the work complex.

Another difficulty in undertaking an evaluation is in establishing *who* is undertaking the evaluation (Arendsen, 2014). The argument has implications which are twofold. Firstly, participant involvement in the evaluation offers a complex range of individuals and/or communities reflecting upon the work, a non-linear variety of feedback surrounding the assessment can be produced, and varying suggestions of value, quality, aesthetics and pleasure are provided. By allowing the participants to take part in the process of evaluation, the reliability of the responses gathered may also be called into question. Arendsen (2014, p.114) provides the example of 'people with dementia [who] rarely say which things they did not like […] the memory of it had gone completely gone'. Therefore there is an ethical dilemma involved in the 'conflict of moral values that strives for an inclusive, collaborative and democratic process [alongside] the limited capacities of the participants' (Arendsen, 2014, p.33).

Secondly, if the decision is for the participant to not have a role in this process: 'is it then ethical to represent a participant in an evaluation by other stakeholders?' (Arendsen, 2014, p.34). The results may be at risk of being tweaked, manipulated, or

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influence the quality of what happens 'in the room' with participants (AMQ, 2018, p.12).

changed to fit the funder's criteria. The work may have been misinterpreted and the observations of the practitioner may be biased or ill-informed. Therefore, evaluation is limited by who is going to undertake the evaluation(s) and who is allowed to influence the evaluation process, as evaluations are of minimal worth if the content cannot be trusted.

The protection of those involved in the evaluation, and whether or not the true and full content of the assessment is disclosed is a tenuous area. The concern is related to the fact that trust can be easily broken by insensitive uses of information gathered through evaluation and this questions how we balance honest and valuable outcomes with the need to prove worth (Arendsen, 2014).

Influencing an evaluative process highlights another important issue concerned with agenda-driven evaluations where there is an expectation of 'unrealistic outcomes and a demand that these be promised at the outset. This places practitioners in the position of having to spin the evaluations to avoid punishment or secure more funding in the future' (Arendsen, 2014, p.44). The field is expected to show that their models are working, and this has become 'ubiquitous with funders increasingly offering funding on the basis of 'payment by results' (Hughes, 2014). In having to provide evidence of performance impact in relation to targets defined by authorities and institutions, practitioners can become anxious about proving that what they do works:

> 'this anxiety in some cases stems from demands made from funding bodies and policy makers, which may contribute to a bullshit rhetoric that has developed around the alleged transformative powers of the arts and their consequent (presumed) positive social impacts […] as a result, efficacy and assessment can feel like positivist tools of authorities that are using theatre that are, if not actively antagonistic, more often than not external to the process of using theatre to make change' (Snyder-Young, 2013, p.1)

With this in mind ‘evaluation does not provide room for unintended impacts, harmful consequences can be overlooked, and therefore vital lessons cannot be learned in order to improve Applied Theatre practices in the future’ (Moriarty, 2002, pp.17-18). This creates disincentives for honest reporting on experiences. Challenges faced can be overlooked, and ‘observations of impacts are less than or different from the stated objectives of the project’ (Jennings & Baldwin, 2010, p.85). If the evaluation is not carried out holistically and does not provide room for unintended impacts, this may limit the opportunities for developing applied work in the future.

The final complication in undertaking evaluations is in gauging exactly what needs to be evaluated. The aspects of transformation are often connected to therapeutic healing and change linked to science which can make demands for quantitative research (where has transformation worked?), drama is an artistic endeavour which often operates from qualitative research ‘and the value of personal expression and richness of data are foregrounded’ (Jones, 2010, p.5) (why has transformation worked?) There is currently a lack of compatibility in how these two assessment methods are speaking to each other. These two areas are predominantly encountered ‘in ways that emphasize their difference, even irreconcilably’ (Jones, 2010, pp.5-6). Therefore the challenge lies in the difficulty to combine measurement frameworks with disparate foci, as they require separate investigations into learning, which ‘segregate the measurement frameworks’ (Jones, 2013, p.4). Currently descriptions of applied theatre focus on practice and theory and there needs to be greater ‘attention to praxis and a commitment to methodologies of critical analysis and performance ethnography as well as evidence-based research’ (Landy & Montgomery, 2012, p.xxii). In order to assess and measure successfully the practice may need to establish a new research culture that does not divide its assessment frameworks. Conversation needs to occur

between the different aspects of the projects and resistance to closed circuits needs to take place through a promotion of inter-disciplinarity across the forms. Although measuring the work can prove complicated the practitioner must be mindful of how, when combining theatre with transformative intentions, they can capture results in a meaningful way.

Conclusively, evaluation remains frustrating. Although practitioners 'seldom agree what should be considered as 'best practice' in evaluation' (Arendsen, 2014, p.34), ethical dilemmas make it problematic to provide the opportunity to truly gauge a project's success/worth, and determining what needs to be evaluated is challenging; there still remains 'a crying need for the evaluation of Applied work' (Ackroyd, 2001, p.2). It will be important to explore how each project is articulating the success of their work, who is included in the dialogue surrounding its success, and what exactly has been evaluated, in order to gauge how transformation is being viewed, captured or discussed.

3.1.3 Commissioning transformation

Commissioning is traditionally by governmental organisations, charitable trusts, arts councils, varying funding organisations and agencies, NGOs/NPOs, businesses, sponsorships, patrons, (to name a few) and all become the stakeholders of the work. They present diverging interests, intrapersonal conflicts, power positions, and various values which attach themselves to the projects and present challenges in achieving applied theatre's overarching purposes.

The thesis acknowledges that the commissioning of projects is in a constant flux and exists in an ever-changing environment. Whilst some organisations (e.g. NGOs/NPOs) commission work for non-profit and with transformation at the heart of

their work, other organisations can often have an agenda behind why the work should be created. Agendas can be at odds with the direct needs of the community and are therefore important to interrogate. As an example, Prentki & Preston (2009, p.14) warn of governmental agendas that may make stipulations as to the content and context of the applied theatre project. They state that:

> 'it is commonplace in the UK today for applied theatre projects to be undertaken directly or indirectly at the behest of the Government's social inclusion policies but a critique of those policies or an examination of the deeper causes of exclusion typically fall outside the scope of these projects'.

Therefore, funding can be closely tied 'to instrumentalist outcomes such as reducing youth offending rates or cutting the numbers of teenage pregnancies, in short money, is not always available to give 'the oppressed' an experience of finding their own voices through a theatre process' (Prentki, 2015, p.58), but is often given to those who are able to 'tick the boxes' that fulfil the funder's criteria. Therefore, it needs to be remembered that funders have agendas. Money is not for free, and many funding organisations offer money to companies, artists and organisations 'with a track record' who are either 'limited companies or registered charities' (MacManus, 2018). For example, in 2014 Red Ladder Theatre Company who focuses their work around social change and global justice were cut from the ACE funding.[11]The announcements at the time was that ACE was concerned with keeping a 'status quo and that meant that buildings–particularly London buildings–continued to be funded over small organisations and the grassroots' (Gardner, 2014). Their agenda was clear 'the money invested by the Arts Council would only benefit those already well up the ladder. Emerging artists, young companies, new audiences and those working beyond

[11] They only re-entered the ACE portfolio in 2017, in time for their 50th anniversary in 2018.

London would have to make do with the crumbs. Again' (Gardner, 2014). This draws attention to how this work is limited by context (e.g. education, health education, prison, etc.), content (issues that are wide ranging but may include crime, teenage pregnancy, unemployment), and the people who are deciding on what exactly these aspects should be (e.g. the government, funders, stakeholders, gate-keepers etc.).

Projects are squeezed to fit the funding criteria (possibly at the expense of the community), and the starting point of a project becomes the funding and not necessarily the idea or desired outcome. The danger of being co-opted by funding agencies is a challenge for a range of applied theatre projects. It can create divisive funding politics across projects, between practitioners and participants, and across various social communities and geographical locations. The proverb 'he who pays the piper calls the tune' indicates the dangers of incentive-driven, potentially agenda-focused work. The proverb suggests the risk of manipulation and coercion for work that is delivered by someone not necessarily part of the community, who could be potentially promoting change, with little validation from the community in relation to its use or relevance. Furthermore, the area of change may have been decided because the person in power has a motive ulterior to the community's needs and consequently the position of the practitioner becomes synonymous with power, authority and control. Participation is therefore 'a powerful tool for change' and simultaneously 'capable of being harnessed as a validation of existing authority' (Sloman, 2011, p.49) enforced in order to control groups of citizens. This demonstrates how applied theatre can be used to curtail freedom, progression and transformation as much as facilitate it. This can cause tensions between the partnerships and the communities engaged with the work, which can be due to:

> ‘financial implications surrounding the project requiring that the myriad ways in which humans relate to each other- the very stuff of culture are reduced to the codes of monetary exchange– what do I get out of this? How much is it worth? Can I afford it?’ (Prentki, 2015, p.56)

What this establishes is that, in a cultural climate where much public funding prioritises certain criteria, outcomes and values, applied theatre needs to question whether engagement reflects a genuine commitment to providing change. Therefore the ‘money often comes with strings attached […] and it appears as if today’s corporations are less interested in philanthropy and more interested in targeting specific demographics’ (Downs, 2013, p.36). If we are accepting our ‘roles without understanding the deeper politics of any funding agenda and/or organisational power’ (Balfour, 2009, p.6) we will be unable to provide work for the benefit of the community participating with the project. The commissioning of transformation is important to acknowledge throughout the thesis as it highlights a need to be clear about allegiances, politics of intention, funding origins, and practitioner’s aims and intentions.

3.1.4 The sacrifices made to achieve transformation

Applied theatre, as a form intending to be mutually progressive, inclusive and transformative can often be sacrificed in order to promote a different ideology ‘which may not be really compatible with the concrete situation and mind set of the people it needs to reach […] therefore turning out to be an imposition’ (Prentki, 2015, p.39). This implies that the benefits of the work may be compromised and sacrificed for the intentions of a wider, and often political, process.

As an example, Thompson explains how he became conscious of a major political association within his work. When undertaking discussions about ‘the Unicef-funded project in Northern Sri Lanka in 2000, he became more conscious of the dual nature

of applied theatre' (in Arnot, 2009). During the day he was creating issue-based drama pieces about the effects of living in a war zone; but through the project he faced the difficulty of separating the work being identified as a form of resistance, from it being sacrificed as a form of propaganda. He questioned whether through the project the 'theatre/performance event doubled up as recruitment for young children into the Tamil Tigers' (Arnot, 2009).[12] The example demonstrates how the benefits of the work can be overshadowed and sacrificed to the overriding political process and suggests that regardless of how well intentioned the work professes to be; it is bound to agenda and politics.

Community sacrifice can also be found in the destruction of diversity as projects praise the similarities and not the differences of a culture. Cultural plurality is inconvenient for development and often it is the preferred outcome for cultures to not 'get in the way of political or economic progress [and instead] share a set of universal values which make them respond uniformly to change' (Prentki, 2015, p.64). This is tied up with community sacrifice, and Conquergood's (1985) 'Four Ethical Pitfalls' which are referred to as performative stances progress this notion. Conquergood presents: 'the custodian's rip-off, 'the enthusiast's infatuation', 'the curator's exhibitionism', and 'the sceptic's cop-out' as the extreme corners of a moral map which relate to 'when one seeks to express cultural experiences which are clearly separate from his or her lived world' (Conquergood, 1985, p.4).

'The enthusiast's infatuation' looks at the idea of sacrifices which trivialise the community by asking 'aren't all people really just alike?' (Conquergood, 1985, p.6).

[12] 'Tamil Tigers are a guerrilla organization that sought to establish an independent Tamil state, Eelam, in northern and eastern Sri Lanka' (Arnot, 2009). They are classed as one of the most organised, effective and brutal terrorist groups in the world.

This favours ‘a glaze of generalities’ (Conquergood, 1985, p.6) and the identification with the community here is superficial and surface. This may attend *only* to similarities, therefore being in danger of becoming a vehicle for exploitation and community sacrifice. Projects become unconcerned with specific cultures, and instead aim towards a sacrifice for ‘the universal’. This is a process of appropriating, decontextualizing, representing and sacrificing cultures through its direct connection to the political process. It is often an application that oppresses those:

> ‘who are not European, white, male, middle-class, Christian, able-bodied, thin and heterosexual. The ideal expressed in much of the literature in critical pedagogy is that students should be encouraged to speak with their "authentic voices" thus making themselves "visible" and help them define themselves as authors of their own world […] However, sharing these experiences can be problematic: White women. Women of colour. Men of colour. White men against masculine culture. Fat people. Gay men and lesbians. People with Disabilities and Jews do not speak of the oppressive formations that condition their lives in the spirit of "sharing"’ (Grady, 2003, p.75).

Transformation then is often in danger of being used and presented as a vehicle to undermine collaborative reflection by situating human experience as an individualistic transaction, rather than a communal negotiation. This links the work to neoliberalism, shifting from the community and social to the individual and personal.

Projects that only address the similarities of the community universalise all participants and present them as one and the same and can be seen as a programme of activity that does little more than confirm the social order. This is an example of intersectionality in which the oppression and discrimination becomes the result of an individual's social identity. Therefore instead of emancipating ‘marginalised’ communities from their oppression, they are intersectionalised and disadvantaged by

‘their race, class, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, and/or other identity markers’ (Crenshaw in BostonBlog, 2017).

Conquergood also explores the risk of highlighting only the differences between cultures, sacrificing a community in its desire to ‘astonish rather than understand’ (Conquergood, 1985, p.6). Conquergood’s study of the ‘curator’s exhibitionism’ is committed to the differences between the practitioner and the community, ‘the wild-kingdom approach, which grows out of the fascination with the exotic, primitive, culturally remote’ (Conquergood, 1985, p.7). Community members are used for demonstrative purposes, they are made into museum-exhibits and according to this view the project sacrifices the community to exploit differences.

To demonstrate an exploitation of differences, Baxter & Low (2017) offer the example of the South African project of the early 1990s titled *Sarafina II.* In 1995 the Department of Health awarded the playwright Mbongeni Ngema upwards of R14 million (£637,000) to produce and tour a musical based on AIDS for local learning and entertainment purposes. The musical was deemed to be entirely misleading on the subject of HIV/AIDS prevention, treatment and dying and was questioned regarding its relevance, faithfulness and ability to really create change. The suggestion that the director undertook no research nor contacted any AIDS organisations to support the construction of the work demonstrates the lack of knowledge by the practitioner(s) in relation to the issue suggests that *‘Sarafina II* is a classic example of how a top-down, big budgeted approach is applied to a small medium and how this kind of quick-fix solution can ensure failure of an otherwise useful strategy’ (Durden in Francis, 2012, p.4). It also more significantly suggested that the project ran the ‘risk of undermining objectives of health intervention, putting people’s lives at risk and bringing the

theatrical approach into dispute, due to only sufficient and contextual knowledge of the issue' (Baxter & Low, 2017, pp.69-70).

It is important to recognise the tension of both over-familiarising yourself with a culture you have little or no prior experience of *or* entering a community and promoting your own values and ideals at odds with what the community needs and/ or would benefit from (assuming that the starting point of the project is representative of an outsider going into a community, rather than specific groups working in partnership to help define the practice. See 3.1.1). The sacrifices made for transformation can often be at the behest of a community. To avoid any element of sacrifice is difficult, but there must be an attempt to try and promote an open dialogue with those involved in the work in order 'to develop a culture not based on methods and models of change, but on shared political values and on an ethics of practice' (McDonald, 2005, p.70). It will be important to recognise that applied theatre, whilst intending to achieve inclusion, progression and transformation may simultaneously, and perhaps unknowingly, achieve its antithesis.

3.1.5 Combining disparate forms of theatre to achieve transformation

Although it has been suggested that the disciplines that fall under applied theatre's umbrella term can yield positive results and work successfully together (Campbell & Kear, 2001); ultimately the work depends on its participants and their openness in order for the project to succeed. For those motivated to participate in the rather 'complex rituals which characterise this approach' (Kellerman, 1992, p.23) may find it helpful. However, the participant comfortable with drama may struggle with confronting elements of transformation, the patient versed in the workings of confronting issues may be horrified at the thought of interacting with their issues dramatically, and those

participants who have experience of neither may demonstrate anxiety and frustration at the thought of engaging with either or both.

Due to the nature of the work of theatre, a lot of the practitioners look towards experimentation as the chosen method of exploration. This can often be an element of creative risk-taking found when interacting with drama and dramatic techniques, but can also create difficulties for a range of participants familiar with alternative methods of interaction. This again links to the workings of disparate forms and indicates the complicated terrain when combining theatre with diverse marginalised communities, but also highlights the challenges that practitioners of the practice must face. They must have therapeutic training to achieve levels of transformation and be familiar with the delivery of drama *and* dramatic conventions. The tensions are a macrocosm of the inherent differences between the forms and not only must a practitioner ensure that the two forms can work in harmony; but they must also ensure that they produce relevant results.

The work, even in its stages of conception is riddled with complications, challenges and obstacles from the differing profiles of people accessing the work and the combination of disparate forms of work mean that the projects can inhabit challenges before the participants are even asked to be involved. It is important to acknowledge that these complications create challenges for a project which seeks to change and transform individuals and communities of people.

3.2 Interrogating applied theatre in relation to active participation

If a community is asked to participate in an issue or topic, related to their lives, then the supposition is that the work is encouraging and affords a forum for relevant discussion. Change and challenges can be addressed and the audience/actor are

afforded a space in which to safely confront issues that they are currently facing, or resolve conflict to achieve empowerment, confidence and transformation. Lambert (1982, p.78) explains that if this is:

> ‘done well […] it can be an experience that the community and individuals treasure and have a great depth of pride in, a shared process that can have a long-term impact and that can become part of the fabric and folklore of the community’.

However, like fellow critics Bishop, McConachie, and Machon, White (2013) joins the interrogation of participatory art arguing that it can be a limited form of performance which ‘leaves many problems and questions open for further critical consideration’ (White, 2013, p.356). This draws the thesis to attend to the challenges of applied theatre’s participatory form. This chapter will address: the scales of participation and active vs. passive forms of participation.

3.2.1 The scale of participation

For illustrative purposes, Arnstein (1969) offers eight rungs on the ‘ladder of participation’ (see appendix one), which correspond to the extent to which a citizen can demonstrate power in determining an end product. The ladder suggests that there are significant gradations of citizen participation which are useful to reference when exploring what levels of participation may be taking place within an applied theatre project. Arnstein’s ladder can be used to decipher ‘who the people are who take part in this work, and on what basis, and under what expectations they are present’ (Freebody, et.al, 2018, p.9). Arnstein’s ladder helps to incite conversation regarding where on the ladder a participatory project may be placed.

Parts of the ladder allow for the consideration of 'participatory power structures which grant agency to audiences to engage on their own terms, this includes the ability to take control of the theatrical event [and/or] to withdraw from participation' (Fletcher-Watson, 2015, p.24). The citizen power sections of the ladder suggest the power of agency and control for the participant and reflect work that may be considered as presenting a bottom-up approach as part of a co-production between practitioner and participant. However, the ladder is also useful in pointing toward a concerning negativity surrounding participatory forms of work in relation to the considerations placed at the top of the ladder and its top-down messages.[13] Here Arnstein appears to suggest that there are opportunities to exert power over communities and individuals. Her rungs at this point on the ladder range from manipulation through to full citizen control and suggest instances of power and control *over* the participant, which demonstrate the challenges of the practice. Whilst it is acknowledged that the typology is limited in juxtaposing *powerless* citizens with the *powerful* to highlight the fundamental divisions between them, the ladder simultaneously 'provides a provocative typology of participatory practices that show that participation can be liberating, whilst others may feel unsettled by a tokenistic experience which appears to legitimise the artist's hegemonic status' (Fletcher-Watson, 2015, p.14). Through the latter, the participant suffers as they are simply used as a function of the work and have either unlimited or very restricted active say in the progression of the project and its realisation of transformation. If the participatory practice is largely divorced from its audiences (White, 2013, p.22; Freshwater, 2009, p.17), Bourriaud (2002, p.277) warns that:

[13] (5- Placation, 4- Consultation, 3-Informing, 2-Therapy, 1-Manipulation)

> ‘the risk is that the audience as participant becomes lost within the work and as a consequence is no longer empowered to see the work and/or make the transformation; rather than an empowered position of active agency, this is a disempowered position of the functionary’.

In this way applied theatre is at risk of asking a community to participate in theatrical work, for reasons of change, but then never allows the participants to be empowered enough to be in charge of the change happening. There is also evidence of complicated issues that prevail when setting up projects for communities but leaving that community with all of the power to oversee and lead the work. Removing the practitioner from the work and not continuing the support they may have grown accustomed to leaves projects and communities vulnerable, individuals engaged but often redundant, and the aims of applied theatre unsuccessful.

The challenges identified here mean that the desire for applied work to provide an ‘involved, integral and active participant’ (See 2.3) are difficult to achieve. They suggest that audience participation, whilst hailing the participant with its invitation to join in the action, can simultaneously stipulate the actions participants are to undertake (White, 2013). The experiences of the participant in audience participation ‘are not problems to be solved in dogmatic terms, but key elements of the dramaturgy of audience participatory theatre’ (White, 2013, p.1), and are therefore integral considerations to discuss throughout the thesis, and in particular the case study chapters.

3.2.2 Active- good, passive- bad

Participation suggests that participants at one point or another will be encouraged to ‘begin to take small but significant personal risks, and prick the bubble of inhibiting self-consciousness’ (Haylo & Reynolds, 2000, p.xxiv). On occasion the participant may

need to be ‘gently persuaded or cajoled’ if they appear reluctant to move from their position of spectator to active participant. The overarching aim is to get to a position where participants can become active in making a dramatic event of their own’ (Haylo & Reynolds, 2000, p.xxiv). Word and concepts such as immersive, active, passive, are all used in relation to this desire for participation and ‘behind the words is a barely concealed judgement that an active audience is good, a passive audience bad’ (Reason, 2015, p.272).

The criticism suggests that those involved with a participatory form of theatre promote the idealism that the project is successful if there is a certain level of ‘goodness’ achieved. In this context it can mean ‘politically good (empowered), ethically good (empathetic), creatively good (not reactionary), perhaps even physically good (wellbeing)’ (Reason, 2015, p.272). There is also a negative perception of the passive spectator which offers varied suggestions of empty participation, weak or tokenistic participation. The idea of active or passive ‘divides a population into those with capacity on one side, and those with incapacity on the other’ (Ranciere, 2011, p.2) and Bourriaud (2002) criticises this as the ‘too simplistic’ statement that all audiences need to be always active and always participating in order for work to be successful. Bourriaud’s work has catalysed debate regarding the unrealised political potential of contemporary participation. He is referencing the artists who have begun to engage more directly with the social potential that can be found in art, which are often overlooked if active is always seen as good, and passive is always seen as bad. Bourriaud (2002, p.11) instead recommends *relational* art (about human interactions and its social contexts). Here Bourriaud is offering an example of the complexity that is bound to investigating participatory endeavours, but reinforces the worthwhile nature of its exploration beyond the simplistic ‘active’ and ‘passive’ implications.

Personal effects and reactions to participation can also evoke complications and challenges in both the delivery and reception of participatory forms. As the form is placing importance on the integral involvement of the participant, there are a lot of demands placed upon the audience/actor and this can cause a large amount of anxiety for the participants especially if they are unfamiliar with performance, performing, or the arts (which many applied theatre participants are likely to be). Anxiety is the beginning of the negative effects that can result from a move from audience to participant through the process of 'putting oneself on show'. The feelings of anxiety 'may result in genuine risks to self-esteem, public esteem, even psychological and physical well-being' (White, 2013, p.1). There is a risk of embarrassment, and of exposing thoughts and emotions- personal and/or important to the participant. All are bound up in the 'risk of taking part in an activity which may turn out to not be enjoyable, or which might actually be distressing' (White, 2013, p.5). These demands can be seen as overwhelming and intimidating for the participant as they are asked to expose elements of themselves they may have insecurities about. Furthermore, and dependent upon the community engaging with participatory forms, their participation may go against expectations relevant to their positions in the community and the repercussions may include exclusion from that community.

The considerations presented here highlight difficulties when asking a participant to be 'involved, integral and active' as a prerequisite of the form. They suggest that participation in serving applied theatre's mission can provoke wide ranging limitations to and by the participant, and reiterate the inherent challenges embedded in this complex form of theatre.

Summary

The purpose of this chapter has been to explore the challenges inherent to applied theatre's desire to achieve transformation and 'active levels' of participation.

The investigation demonstrates the constraints and tensions between a form that hopes to be transformative, and a form that is heavily reliant upon accessing complex cultures, implementing agenda-driven incentives, exploring diverse contexts, and making sacrifices to achieve transformation. Therefore when applied theatre is to be used for transformative purposes it is important to recognise that the form will automatically embody a particularly acute version of these tensions before Shakespeare's works and marginalised environments have even been considered. It will be important to remember that transformation is part of a complex political web of funding, agenda and governmental initiatives and it is not always clear who benefits from the suggested transformation. Transformation is unpredictable, difficult to measure and can pose an imposition on communities of people. Therefore the discourse surrounding transformative principles remains a contested area of investigation and the journey toward, or the achievement of transformation will never be an easy one. This chapter, by interrogating applied theatre in relation to its transformative intentions has addressed the discourses and politics associated with work that aims to be socially transformative.

The thesis also suggests that participatory work is challenging. Findings indicate that communities can often feel and appear vulnerable when undertaking active participation for a range of the reasons aforementioned (Reason, 2015: White, 2013: Slachmuijder, 2006: Tomaselli, 2006: Cornwall & Brock, 2005: Haylo & Reynolds, 2000: Arnstein, 1969). The challenges are found in both the role of the participant and

the placement of responsibility with the practitioner of the work. The field is in tension with a desire to achieve integral involvement and the reluctance to pass over power, which may be due to funding pressures and/or coercive agendas. Therefore it is a complicated task of attempting to find balance and the challenge remains present in a range of applied projects that require high levels of ‘active participation’.

This section covers a range of relevant critical and political theory, which is bound up with this type of work. It remains important to remember when moving forward into considerations of this work in more specific terms. The debates surrounding applied theatre are explored and the challenges that may be associated with applied theatre projects are highlighted. Findings suggest that the field is complicated, tenuous and may not always achieve its desired outcomes.

Chapter Four: The use of Shakespeare's plays amidst marginalised communities

This chapter represents the literature review for the thesis focussing upon some of the most relevant publications that address the topic of Shakespeare's use within applied theatre settings. The chapter attempts to document pre-existing literature that looks at *where* and *why* Shakespeare's work is an apparatus for use in applied theatre settings. It has purposefully been placed after the context chapters as a means of progressing some of the findings previously discovered when considering applied theatre. The work included for examination represents literature that looks specifically and exclusively at Shakespeare's use within applied theatre settings from a mostly participatory perspective and with the purpose of engaging marginalised communities. The review will consider two important threads to the thesis: *where* Shakespeare's work is used as an apparatus for use in applied and participatory settings, and *why* Shakespeare's work is regarded as a beneficial addition to this area of practice.

This review will be approached by addressing publications that explore Shakespeare's use amidst a range of marginalised communities, looking at running themes and trends found in discussion about the use of Shakespeare's work in applied settings (not necessarily chronological). These are identified as:

- Amateur Shakespeare.
- Applied Shakespeare.
- Community Shakespeare.
- Shakespeare in penal settings.

- Shakespeare in therapeutic settings.

- Shakespeare in Disability settings.

It is important to note at this early stage that in relation to the Disabled community there is a dearth of literature connected to this area of practice, which highlights gaps in this research, suggesting an area of key contribution connected to this thesis.

Overall, this chapter identifies a range of important publications that address the use of Shakespeare's work in marginalised communities. It surveys existing literature in this field of research, suggests gaps in current knowledge, and formulates areas for further research.

4.1 Amateur Shakespeare

Dobson, M. (2011) *Shakespeare and the Amateur Performance: A Cultural History* provides a useful point of departure for beginning a reflection on Shakespeare's use in non-traditional settings. His book 'admirably fills a vacancy in the historiography of Shakespeare at the margins, performing in varying conditions' (Herold & Wallace, 2011, p.1). It draws attention to the 'persistent inattention of scholars towards non-professional productions of Shakespeare's plays' (Dobson, 2011, p.13) and seeks to address this by offering the reader a comprehensive account of 'amateur performances [of Shakespeare's plays] in the English-speaking world over the four centuries since they were written' (Dobson, 2011, p.1).

Dobson notes the 'contexts and styles in which people, who are not [necessarily] theatrical professionals, have chosen to perform Shakespeare's plays for themselves and their immediate communities' (2011, p.1). His account of various 'community Shakespeare's provides an indication of the geographic scope of this work' (Dobson,

2011, p.1) and makes claims for Shakespeare's capacity for social inclusiveness. Dobson's book is not a study of contemporary community Shakespeare, but rather a historiographical and at times anecdotal account, of amateur theatre companies' work with Shakespeare. His work does not explore the intentions of the use of Shakespeare's work with the different communities but does provide an extensive history of where Shakespeare's plays are delivered within community settings.

His work reflects the challenges, times and places in which Shakespeare may have been performed addressing the question 'how have different instances of amateur performance negotiated between Shakespeare's plays as expressions of high art or at least national culture and the lived everyday experience of the local cultures in which they have been mounted?' (Dobson, 2011, p.11). Dobson traces a history that moves from the domestic space to amateur dramatic productions, from prisons of war to mental hospitals, school programmes to village workshops, highlighting just how ubiquitous the use of Shakespeare has been. Nicholson (2012, p131) notes: '*Shakespeare and Amateur performance* raises significant questions about the politics of place and performance that has resonance with many different practices in drama education and applied theatre' and ultimately provides a good starting text for anyone interested in understanding the scope of the use of Shakespeare's work in applied theatre settings.

4.2 Applied Shakespeare

Although Shakespeare only features as a minor element in Boal's work, Shakespeare's influence on Boal's imagination should not be underestimated. An indication of this is clear from noting the title of his Autobiography: *Hamlet and the baker's son: my life in theatre and politics* (2001) and from Boal's identification with

Hamlet in what he considers as the outsider-observer/director-creator. Boal has worked directly with Shakespeare's plays on several occasions and also with the Royal Shakespeare Company (RSC). His production of the Tempest (1979), and the documentation that surrounds it, provides the best insight into how he believes Shakespeare's plays might be best used by applied theatre practitioners. Boal's links to applied theatre draw together the various areas of this thesis and go a long way in suggesting how Shakespeare's work and applied theatre can be cohesive and collaborative.

His production La Tempestad (The Tempest) questions the lessons of Shakespeare's play by adapting the text to serve the needs of a specific constituency. Boal (in Driskell, 1975, p.71) states:

> 'The Tempest has always been understood as the drama about the European nobleman who goes to a tropical island, and has the right to settle there, to enslave the inhabitants of that island. La Tempestad is seen from the point of view of Caliban, who is traditionally maligned as being ugly and offensive, and not from the colonialist point of view of Prospero, who speaks for Shakespeare. I try to show that native is beautiful and that the invaders are the repugnant ones'.

By doing so, Boal draws attention to some of the more problematic values embedded in traditional/conventional uses of Shakespeare's text which will be important to remember when exploring the different company's uses of Shakespeare's work. Boal touches on issues of representation and power that are central to this study.

4.3 Community Shakespeare

Kershaw, B. (1991*) King Real's King Lear: radical Shakespeare for the nuclear age* discusses the Welfare State's early use of Shakespeare's work as part of a project of social intervention in the 1980's. The chapter *The Celluloid Nightmare* documents

the controversial ‘community film’ titled *The Tragedy of King Real* (commissioned by Adrian Mitchell and inspired by Shakespeare’s King Lear). The work was documented over a seven year period from 1983-1990, on location in Barrow in a desolate warehouse. About fifty, mostly unemployed locals were involved in its production. The project’s aim was described as ‘developing a concept of vernacular art whereby we respond continually to local demand, producing plays, bands, dances, songs, ornaments and oratories to order, so generating a social poetry of a high order within a very specific community context’ (Kershaw, 1991, p.8). What the work ultimately demonstrates is ‘a fundamentally *participatory* tradition, in which the community had control’ (Kershaw, 1991, p.257).

Kershaw documents the adaptation of Shakespeare’s work but warns of the challenges of producing work in which a diverse and specialised community is involved in its consideration. He touches upon the ‘naivety’ of reconstituting King Lear, ‘where the storyline simplifies frequent power struggles into crude black-and-white issues’ (Kershaw, 1991, p.250). There are also complications between the two traditions, the community’s and Shakespeare’s (Kershaw, 1991, p.250) and Kershaw argues that *King Lear* only makes sense to the audience because of its intertextuality and contextuality, and the variable positions that the audiences may have in relation to the text.

Kershaw’s review is important as it assesses the Welfare State’s ability to use Shakespeare’s plays in applied theatre settings by addressing the relationship between performance text and socio-political context. He highlights major complications with the form and the challenges of an agenda-driven, funding based incentive and explains that his project was unable to:

> ‘develop organically over years or respond to or follow up the long term needs of the community […] we were obliged to generate more product rather than process and work to rapid (and to an extent commercial) deadlines in strange lands […] we could not respond to or follow up the longer term needs of the community, because essentially we were not part of any community’ (Kershaw (1991, p.250).

Kershaw also explains how there were issues behind a company entering a community different to their own. Barrow represented a community known for its shipyards, submarines and manufacturing of artillery weapons. *Real Lear* focussed on a Shakespeare for the nuclear age where the outbreak of peace was considered bad news (Kershaw, 1991). The welfare state was concerned with dramatizing the dynamics of the local community, at a micro-political engagement. It played into some of the youth’s fears of the closure of the shipyards and tangibly worked to include the community (e.g. a submarine was constructed by young apprentices and featured as a central aesthetic focus throughout the film). However all of this was captured with no pre-existing congruence between participants and practitioners, therefore the Welfare State were met with ‘the Barrovian cold shoulder’ (Kershaw, 1991, p.250). Kershaw’s work highlights important challenges bound to community-based projects generally. These remain central to the study and reflect back to the overarching challenges previously established in the context chapters of the thesis, validating the notions of risk and challenge from a more practice-based perspective.

Jensen, M.P. (2014) *"You speak all your part at once, cues and all": Reading Shakespeare with Alzheimer's Disease,* attempts to question and raise the issue of advocacy in ‘service’ Shakespeare. The goal of the work ‘was to find analogues between the play and life as Alzheimer's patients experience it, especially experiences

that contribute to or damage self-esteem' (Jensen, 2014). The article regards Shakespeare's combination with therapy as:

> 'a success because the group helped patients express their concerns and frustrations and taught them coping mechanisms that would, at least for a time, make their lives better […] these included building self-esteem, coping with frustration, improving communication, and helping patients accept their limitations and thrive within them' (Jensen, 2014).

Jensen's article is mostly anecdotal and perhaps overly optimistic in places. The article documents an initial exploration into the field of Shakespeare and therapy and uses the findings to appeal for further investigation into this area when stating:

> 'I hope this short, anecdotal, unscientific article will put this topic into conversation in the Alzheimer's care community with the result that a longer, non-anecdotal scientific study of Shakespeare or other literatures will be undertaken to ascertain their therapeutic efficacy' (Jensen, 2014).

His work is limited and offers no attempt to link the project to fact or scientific study relevant to Alzheimer's disease; neither does he relate findings to other work that explores theatre and therapy or Shakespeare and therapy to his project. The article appears to pertain to three assumptions which made the project desirable: 'Shakespeare is hard, Shakespeare is rewarding, and Shakespeare is worth doing' (Jensen, 2014).

Schwartz-Gastine, I. (2014) *Performing A Midsummer Night's Dream with the Homeless (and Others) in Paris*, studies a group of homeless, 'non-actors' who perform *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. The article predominantly offers a description of the process and production that took place in Paris, and outlines the mission to create theatre for and by people from ostracized communities in plays that speak to

their needs. The work was influenced by Boal (and the theatre of the oppressed) and aimed to:

> ‘reach people who otherwise feel excluded from society for personal, medical, or social reasons […] proving that while these people might feel like social outsiders, they have the capacity to join together in a theatrical event’ (Schwartz-Gastine, 2014).

The work explores and experiments with the idea of transformation and from 2009-2010 ‘the transformation of a person through play-acting, the transformation of a person through love and desire, and the transformation of reality through theatrical illusion, was explored’ (Schwartz-Gastine, 2014).

Although the article is hopeful in presenting ‘the idea that transformation of the self is always possible [as] the play[s] can give hope to participants’ (Schwartz-Gastine, 2014), the work lacks any interrogation into how transformation of the individual is captured through the exploration of Shakespeare’s works, or how transformation has been measured or validated. The work does however suggest the reach of Shakespeare’s work, culturally, globally and in relation to very specific communities of people.

Garrod, A. (2005) *‘O Bottom, thou art translated’: Directing a Bilingual Dream in the Marshall Islands* discusses the use of *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* with one of the poorest nations in the Micronesia. On the island of Bikini at the Marshall Island’s High School, Majuro, Garrod took on the ‘all-consuming challenge’ (Garrod, 2005, p.2) of directing a bilingual rendition of Shakespeare’s Dream. Garrod writes that ‘the island’s children had not acted in a play before nor were they acquainted with live theatre’ (Garrod, 2005, p.2). Although a predominant amount of the article is dedicated to the presentation of the process, rehearsals, decision-making and final performance- told

in a circumstantial manner; there are some significant considerations made within Garrod's work. The challenges of working with a diverse community different from Garrod's own are considered. He discusses the complications with English idiom and language, the need for the play to be accessible aesthetically and within the context of the island, and other peripheral issues such as time keeping, crossing barriers and lasting friendships. His stance on the benefits of the work are held in the notion that the work 'increased the participant's pride, and sense of accomplishment', 'enhanced their command of their second language', and 'proved they could rise to the most formidable challenge' (Garrod, 2015, pp.3-10).

His consideration of the cultural impact and significance of the work for the Bikinians is useful especially when questioning, in a similar manner to Boal, whether Shakespeare is a culturally imperialistic choice. Although the point is raised, it is quickly countered by Wooten who states 'high culture is not the oppressor… it can be seen as an agent of liberation' (in Garrod 2005, p.3). His deliberation over long term impacts of the project is also miss-placed, under-interrogated and confusing. Garrod's passion for the project often means he brushes away significant considerations, and presents assumptive explorations of Shakespeare's uses. Both allow him to conclude his work with the optimistic belief that 'across centuries, across cultures, across languages; Shakespeare's reading of human nature, with all its glories and follies, resonated powerfully' (Garrod, 2005, p.10). Despite this his work offers an example of a marginalised community existing within a unique geographical place and cultural space and raises important questions about Shakespeare's use alongside diverse cultures.

4.4. Shakespeare in penal settings

In 2007, two seminal texts considering Shakespeare's use in penal settings were published. Scott-Douglass, A. (2007) *Shakespeare inside: The Bard behind bars* and offers Trounstine, J. (2007) *Shakespeare behind bars: One Teacher's story of the power of drama in women's prison*.

Scott-Douglass' book is largely composed of interviews, primarily with prisoners, but also with the directors of the Shakespeare Behind Bars project. She offers an account of the ways in which 'secured Shakespeare programs' confront many of the same issues that preoccupy Shakespeare scholars. For example, Scott-Douglass explores questions of race and gender, or religious themes such as conversion and redemption and documents the project's collaboration with a psychologist, highlighting the explicitly therapeutic aims of the initiative.

Prisoners are asked to explore Shakespeare and parallel real-life experiences. Scott-Douglass (2007, p.21) argues that Shakespeare's work holds the key to help understand the prisoner's crimes and states:

> 'Shakespeare approaches philosophical issues about how we live in society, how we order society, what a healthy relationship is, what boundaries we should mountain. These are issues that the [prisoners] didn't reflect on before they committed their crimes. Now that they're here, they're reflective, and many more of them are repentant…Shakespeare gives them a voice that perhaps they wouldn't have otherwise'.

Scott-Douglass works from a critical perspective that is deeply committed to the idea of Shakespeare's timelessness and the possibility of using this timelessness as a technique for change. Scott-Douglass (2007, pp.24-25) explains that through 'focusing on what Shakespeare wrote about 400 years ago and applying this in their lives […]

enables prisoners to learn from their own mistakes'. As such she situates the work as 'encompassing all that life has to offer' (2007, p.28). The appeal of reading Shakespeare as an example of a 'moralising force' (Scott-Douglass, 2007, p.23) is clear for this penal setting.

Shakespeare's plays are often heralded as the tool for change through their ability to touch all with their universal relevance, and there are even claims that the promotion of prison Shakespeare provides a means 'of freedom, social activism and even revolution. Shakespeare provides inmates with opportunities for personal liberation in spite of institutional restrictions' (Scott-Douglass, 2007, p.97). She speaks about how Shakespeare can promote the power to grow by raising 'individual horizons and improving participants' sense of self-esteem' (Scott-Douglass, 2007, p.97). Shakespeare is in a related fashion held to be transformative because he opens the mind of the individual, captures the imagination of the imprisoned, and provides the tools to become a better, well-adjusted individual (See 1.2). Shakespeare is thus constructed as a 'creative, social and spiritual life force, a vital and necessary reminder that, no matter what, we are all human beings' (Scott-Douglass, 2007, p.129). In this regard Shakespeare is held to offer a spiritual component that is a rival and even 'a substitute to the church' (Scott-Douglass, 2007, p.20).

Scott-Douglass takes care to acknowledge that 'Shakespeare is not a cure-for-all the challenges' the participants face; yet she counters that engaging collaboratively with his work 'can help you remember that you're a person' (Scott-Douglass, 2007, p.129). Her publication reiterates some of the assumptions regarding how theatre is used to present 'taken-for-granted' beliefs about Shakespeare's work, and highlights some of the power structures and challenges presented by the penal environment, which will

remain integral to this study.

Trounstine's book (2007) documents ten years teaching at Framingham (MA) Women's Prison and predominantly focuses on six inmates who discover, through Shakespeare's work, a way to live with the constraints of incarceration. Her supporting article *Texts as Teachers: Shakespeare Behind Bars and Changing Lives Through Literature* (2004) speaks of the capacity inherent in Shakespeare's work to help prisoners believe more deeply in their abilities and help create a community where they value themselves (Trounstine, 2004, p.72) enabling 'offenders to leave prison with more assurance that they will be better citizens' (Trounstine, 2004, p.241).

Trounstine's regard for Shakespeare's work is that it provides the prisoner:

> 'The chance to feel heard within the text; it engaged their emotions and allowed the text to resonate with their experiences. But it was Shakespeare's ideas, characters, humour and pathos that had the power to engage. The text was the teacher' (Trounstine, 2007, p.247).

She explains 'I discovered that learning often becomes collaborative because both student and teacher are creating in an environment that does not want creativity' (Trounstine, 2004, p.247).

Unlike Scott-Douglass, Trounstine appears to offer a more complex account of Shakespeare's place in prisons. Her reflections consider her own initial ignorance concerning the 'world of women behind bars,' and discusses the difficulty of pre-conceived notions that prisoners 'deserved to be punished' (Trounstine, 2007, p.56). Trounstine (2007, p.67) documents her journey from naiveté to raised awareness of what can be accomplished and facilitated in the prison setting when explaining that:

> ‘from the beginning, I did not believe education behind bars was to reform the women-that is, to enlighten them about what society says is the ‘best’ way to be, to teach socially accepted behaviour as an antidote to crime. I saw crime as politically driven and often as action without conscience’.

Trounstine’s acute knowledge of the contradiction between setting and endeavour are an ever-present consideration throughout her work. Her publications link the disparate considerations of the thesis, particularly when she considers the challenges of both environment and applied practice. Trounstine (2004, p.73) explains that ‘Theatre is transformative because it opens the mind. When minds open behind bars, you are working against the nature of prison: confinement of mind as well as confinement of body’. This allows her to write about the difficulty of Shakespeare’s use as a tool for change in a penal environment and she states that ‘I saw the potential of Shakespeare to affect the internal life, but I also saw that Shakespeare could be enormously political’ (Trounstine, 2007, p.116). Trounstine in this respect highlights the difficulty of separating the roots of what it means to be incarcerated from the impact of Shakespeare upon women within a penal setting. She is very realistic in documenting the impact of recidivism upon the prisoners and discusses the inherent complications of the environment itself when stating that:

> ‘by now I knew that many had returned to prison, in part because people getting out often are without jobs and unsettled relationships, questionable housing, and minimal support from the community… though I saw change, I also saw the limitations of the gruelling day-to-day of incarceration’ (Trounstine, 2004, p.73).

Trounstine offers a complex account of Shakespeare’s place in prisons and is alert to the politics of her own work.

Shailor, J. (2010) *Performing New Lives: Prison Theatre* brings together a collection

of essays contributed by a range of leading prison educators and activists, which explore a range of prison theatre projects. The essays predominantly consider the criminal justice system and its inclusion of rehabilitation programmes, its difficult circumstances and complicated reception. Shailor dedicates three specific chapters to Shakespeare's use in prisons.

Chapter Thirteen, *The Keeper of the Keys* by Tofteland focuses upon the Shakespeare Behind Bars project (SBB).[14] After providing a background to the SBB, Shailor offers a whistle-stop exploration of the benefits of Shakespeare's work and considers 'the common elements of humanity that Shakespeare reveals,' and the idea that 'under lock and key SBB inmates are able to discover a kind of personal and spiritual freedom through Shakespeare' (Tofteland in Shailor, 2010, p.215). He then looks at the not-so-smooth process of using Shakespeare's work within prisons when discussing the 'institutional terrain behind the razor wire' (Tofteland in Shailor, 2010, p.213). Tofteland explains that he is offering the reader 'insights that have contributed to the success of SBB' (Tofteland in Shailor, 2010, p.215). He references hierarchy and structural boundaries, rules and regulations, the mission of the department and warden regulations, and the need to have a good relationship with and comprehend in full the scope of the warden's job (Tofteland in Shailor, 2010, p.215). Ultimately, through a range of warden reactions to the program Tofteland appears to highlight how 'change and transformation is not just about the inmates who participate in the program. They are also about the correctional administrators, staff and officers who work with the inmates' (Tofteland in Shailor, 2010, p.238), which is helpful when considering the case study chapters that follow and the perspectives and roles that may have influenced

[14] The Shakespeare Behind Bars programme (SBB) began as a prison programme in Kentucky in 1991 by Dr Curtis Bergstrand (then known as Books Behind Bars)

the fruition of a project.

Chapter Sixteen: *Their minds transfigured so together imaginative transformation and transcendence in Midsummer Night's Dream* by Charlebois is a mostly anecdotal account of her time on sabbatical at the Women's Eastern Reception, Diagnostic and Correctional Centre (WERDCC) in Vandalia, Missouri. The work was delivered alongside theatre director Agnes Wilcox, and discusses the opinion that female prisoners 'experienced their own metamorphoses while studying the play' (Charlebois in Shailor, 2010, p.256). Dufresne, J. (2006) *Crime is Easy, Shakespeare is Hard: Reclaiming Children and Youth* also offers an account of Agnes Wilcox's adaptation of *Hamlet* at the Missouri Eastern Correctional Centre, Missouri. Dufresne, also a volunteer in Missouri prison for over several years, documents the *Hamlet* program which ran from 2000-2002. Both article and chapter draw attention to how incentive can play a role in the inmate's desire to participate in the project, reiterated when Charlebois (in Shailor, 2010, p.253) states that 'the prisoners have the potential to earn college credits at Fontboone University, which heightens their appreciation for the class as a bona fide experience in higher education'. Neither author lingers on the significance of the programme's additional incentive. Dufresne instead focuses upon a brief discussion regarding Shakespeare's uses and benefits when suggesting that 'the youth enjoy being exposed to new forms of entertainment' and 'when we finally understood *Hamlet*; we saw how it applied to our lives' (Dufresne, 2006, p.246). Little is said in regards to how exactly Shakespeare's work is used or what explorations regarding his work specifically took place. Although Dufresne states that she saw behaviour change, she adds 'there is no way I can pinpoint the why of the change' (2006, p.247). Charlebois does, however include participant Virginia's rather astute reaction to the project. She is documented as being the only individual who felt that

Shakespeare wasn't the right choice for prison. She states that Shakespeare is 'typically claimed by an elite group of individuals who by virtue over class or education have had access to his play in the 'normal' course of their lives' (Charlebois in Shailor, 2010, p.260). Instead of interrogating the significance of the reflection, Charlebois reacts by calling up other, more positive reactions to the work. The statement alone is incredibly important to the thesis in highlighting that prisoner's themselves are aware of the complex political web in which Shakespeare is weaved.

Both authors briefly indicate the challenges that were faced, particularly in reference to assessing the impact of the value of Shakespeare's work, and the difficulty found in trying to convince everyone involved in the project that it was a worthy endeavour. However both authors on the whole appear to write with the intention that the praise should be for the creator of the programme, rather than a concern with the assessment of the programme itself, its participants, or Shakespeare's role within the project. Although there are interspersions of helpful reflections relevant to the thesis, Dufresne's conclusion highlights most profoundly the work's preoccupation when she states:

> 'although minimal research exists to show whether or not programs like Prison Performing Arts work, talking with some of the participants is convincing evidence that their lives were changed thanks to Agnes and her dedication and belief in them' (Dufresne, 2006, p.248).

The articles offer limited interactions with the analytical opportunities within Shakespeare's plays and the work mostly documents what took place within the rehearsal room.

Chapter Two: *To know my deed: Finding Salvation through Shakespeare* by Bates touches upon her work with the Shakespeare in Shackles Program. The work

predominantly considers and explains the structure of prison life in solitary confinement and the hoops navigated to realise a project of this nature. The work hinges around prisoner Larry Newton and their conversations about Shakespeare. Questions like ‘Why did Macbeth have second thoughts about killing Duncan?’ (Bates in Shailor, 2010, p.33) are explored and link to the questions raised in Newton’s own work *Shakespearean Considerations: Connecting Literature to Life,* which is a 130 page handbook. Newton states ‘Shakespeare offers us a challenge to connect his classic literature to our own lives today. Sitting there on your bunk, it may seem hard to relate to some guy sitting on a throne, but we’re all the same people- just in different places’ (Bates in Shailor, 2010, p.36). The chapter highlights the goal of the program which ‘is to use Shakespearean analysis to challenge and change the faulty thinking patterns of even the most hardened criminals’ (Bates in Shailor, 2010, p.33).

Bates, L. (2013) *Shakespeare Saved My Life: Ten Years in Solitary with the Bard* is a diary-like, anecdotal publication that documents the relationship between prisoner Larry Newton and Dr Laura Bates. In critiquing the book, Levine (2013) states that book is ‘neither Dr Bate’s memoir nor a disquisition on the transformative power of Shakespearean language, it actually centres on murderer and prisoner Larry Newton’s story’. The book unfolds over the ten years Bates worked with prisoners in solitary confinement at Indiana’s Correctional Facility in Wabash Valley and links to Bate’s Shakespeare in Shackles program.

In her accompanying article for the British Council: *Can Shakespeare Help Prisoner’s Reform* (2015) Bates’ standpoint on Shakespeare in prisons is clear when she explains ‘how the world's most famous playwright can help bring about prisoner reform’ (Bates, 2015), stating:

> ‘Shakespeare can help modify prisoners' behaviour in a way that counselling cannot. Counsellors typically begin with the premise: 'you are "broken"; I know how to "fix" you'. Naturally, this kind of approach meets with resistance. Inviting a prisoner to read Shakespeare begins with the opposite premise: 'I believe you are capable of reading the most challenging of literature. Flattered, and often surprised by such an invitation, many prisoners relish, and rise to, the challenge’ (Bates, 2015).

The majority of Bate’s 2013 book reflects amazement at the prisoner’s levels of perception and interpretation of Shakespeare’s work, when she explains that ‘I never heard such an enthusiastic Shakespearean discussion in any college or course I’d taken or taught’ (Bates, 2013, p.28). She also responds to critics who suggest that the prisoners are only interested in ‘time off’ their sentence when explaining that:

> ‘I have two responses to that, one: why is a prisoner’s motivation to earn a degree so that he can return to his family sooner viewed more negatively than a campus student’s motivation to earn a degree so he can make more money? And, two: what about the motivation of a prisoner like Larry Newton, who is serving a sentence of life with no possibility of parole?’ (Bates, 2013, p.11).

At points within the book Bates even grapples with her own motives for the work. She explains that ‘I want to be clear from the start that I do not consider myself a ‘prisoner advocate’ in that I am not crying over their conditions’ (Bates, 2013, p.130). She then spends a lot of time painting a bleak picture about how the prisoners are ‘treated like animals’ making the book read as confused within these sections. She accepts prison conditions and suggests that prisoners needed to earn being treated humanely by ‘behaving’, the latter appears to be a skill only found when exploring Shakespeare’s work.

The format of the work is presented as a workbook with lessons and prisoner responses. These sections of work discuss the readings of a range of play texts,

mainly *Macbeth* and *Richard III,* but appear as more of a guided discussion than a detailed analysis. Unhelpfully the chapters do not run in chronological order (chapter one 2006, chapter two 2000) which makes the lessons and how they progress difficult to follow.

Bates intersperses anecdotal conversations about her own life, which often appear ego-boosting. Throughout there also appears to be a preoccupation with attaining tenure. The greatest limitation of the work is found when Bates offers ‘no self-reflection, no inner dialogue, and little introspection’ (Levine, 2013) in relation to the work she is delivering. She does however give a lot of the pages over to Newton, and his deep realisations about his crimes and offers a large part of the book to Newton’s personal reflections which include his insights into how:

> 'Shakespeare offered me the opportunity to develop new ways of thinking through these plays. I was trying to figure out what motivated Macbeth, why his wife was able to make him do a deed that he said he didn't want to do just by attacking his ego. I had to ask myself what was motivating me in my deeds, and I came face to face with the realisation that I was fake, that I was motivated by this need to impress those around me, that none of my choices were truly my own. And as bad as that sounds, it was the most liberating thing I’d ever experienced, because it meant that I had control of my life. I could be anybody I wanted to be' (Bates, 2013, p.46).

The work is a passionate account as to why Newton holds Shakespeare’s works so dear, but highlights the established issues of the ‘taken-for-granted’ beliefs often in operation when exploring Shakespeare’s plays in penal settings.

Ko, Y.J. (2014) *Macbeth Behind Bars* looks at *Macbeth* performed as part of the *Shakespeare Behind Bars* projects and offers an alternative interaction with the use of Shakespeare’s work in a penal environment in comparison to some of the other aforementioned texts. The paper questions how Shakespeare’s work ‘can help

prisoners come to terms with their crimes' (Ko, 2014), learn empathy for those they have wronged, and help the prisoner's own families, who are deprived of having a normal relationship with the incarcerated. It also grapples with the moral and ethical dilemmas bound to Shakespeare in 'service' by documenting the tensions between straight moral instruction and sympathy for evil. Ko (2014) states:

> 'This difficulty clearly gets ratcheted up in unpredictable ways when actual inmates who are in prison for violent crimes, including murder, perform the play in prison […] From a different angle, one might argue that it aestheticizes or takes pleasure in the representational fidelity of violence and victimhood'.[15]

Ko presents an awareness of the moral difficulties that arise when combining Shakespeare's work and a penal environment. His considerations are directly linked to the overarching issues addressed within this thesis. He discusses the dangers for the participant when 'fostering sympathy for characters who are very deeply compromised morally' (Ko, 2014). He also questions the validity of 'defining Shakespeare's greatness by means of a moral vocabulary' (Ko, 2014). This alignment is linked to the 'corollary of Shakespeare's universality' (Ko, 2014), suggesting that this 'moral vocabulary' is actually compromised because 'Shakespeare often seemed to write without any moral purpose' (Johnson, 1958).

Of all of the publications assessed as part of the literature review, Ko's is the most direct and relevant in addressing the *challenges* of using Shakespeare's texts for transformative purposes. His work links directly to the issues being explored throughout the thesis and is realistic in documenting the moral dilemmas associated

[15] 'Service' is the title given to the journal in which Ko's work was published "What service is here? Exploring Service Shakespeare (2014). It used the term 'service' in line with its interest to discover how Shakespeare can 'service' a community and what 'service' programmes might have in common.

with Shakespeare's combination with 'service'. His interrogations will be important for the chapters that explore the different projects that use Shakespeare's texts for purposes of transformation.

Herold, N. (2011) *Time Served in Prison Shakespeare,* although largely focussed on the 2010 Shakespeare Behind Bars production of *The Winter's Tale,* does offer relevant thought regarding how the productions of 'Shakespeare inside are connected not only to the mainstream Shakespeare in the present tense but to particular historical conditions of the early modern theatre' (Herold, 2011, p.2), although he does not say how or why or to what benefit. Herold (2011, p.8) highlights the objections of Shakespeare's use to this end stating 'developing an inmate's personal relationship with a character implies an 'investment' in a certain mode or representation that many would question'. Herold raises many questions, and offers fewer answers, however, his considerations regarding difficult 'investments' in Shakespearean characters are important and central to the interrogations of this thesis.

Herold, N. (2014) *Prison Shakespeare and the Purpose of Performance* looks much more specifically at the uses of Shakespeare and the lessons found within his plays. He reiterates how prison theatre can reveal elements of early modern theatre in order to rehabilitate inmates, explores 'how the emergence of prison creative arts programs have changed the way we think about inmate rehabilitation and institutional reform' (Herold, 2014, p.80), and investigates how Shakespeare's works have played a role in effecting this change. He explains how inmates can discover 'authentic repentance' by playing a character from a Shakespeare play and suggests that through Shakespeare's use of language and dramatic structure inmates are able to find 'the performance codes and scripting for deep transformative change' (Herold, 2014, p.82).

He uses the term ‘habilitation instead of rehabilitation to avoid implying that the inmates can return to socially normative environment which many of them were never able to do due to poverty or family dysfunctionality’ (Herold, 2014, p.34).

The most important sections of the book in supporting this thesis can be found when Herold discusses the significance of reading Shakespeare’s plays historically. Herold (2014, p.33) suggests that:

> ‘Instead of conferring upon Shakespeare’s past something of value to the present there needs to be a more seamless interweaving of the two. Viewing companies as a penitential community whose rehearsal and production procedures imitate certain historical conditions of the early modern theatre, allows us to invoke certain rituals of repentance that are already in place in the play’s themselves’.

His interrogations are important in supporting the thesis’ justifications behind offering historical readings of a range of Shakespeare’s plays.

Pensalfini, R. (2016) *Prison Shakespeare: For These Deep Shames and Great Indignities* is predominantly a study of the history of drama in prisons from the 1980’s to present day. It also explores the Queensland Shakespeare Ensemble’s Shakespeare Prison Project, Australia; documenting the process, rehearsals, findings and perspectives associated with the work. The work looks at prison Shakespeare’s impact on the prisoners, prison culture and social attitudes to both prisoners and Shakespeare. Pensalfini states that ‘previous studies of Prison Shakespeare have largely been descriptive and *ad hoc*. There are numerous case studies of varying lengths, mostly discussed by practitioners themselves’ (Pensalfini, 2016, p.3). Pensalfini (2016, p.ix) recommends that several vigorous forms of research must be undertaken to offer an all-encompassing view and assessment of the work, which includes the ‘study of scholarly and general materials on a wide variety of prison

Shakespeare programmes, the observation of several influential programmes and discussions with their practitioners, and interviews with participants'.

He evaluates a number of claims made about the outcomes of the projects particularly in reference to health and behaviour and states that 'many practitioners of Prison Shakespeare describe their programmes in terms of the transformative power of Shakespeare's texts on prisoners, pointing anecdotally to long-term behavioural and attitudinal impacts on prisoners who participate in them' (Pensalfini, 2016, p.72). He makes further reference to the agendas attached to the work and the need to satisfy the 'keeper of the keys' (Pensalfini, 2016, p.63).

Pensalfini addresses questions such as 'what is the regenerative power of drama? How does it work? What are the most effective ways of deploying drama in penal settings? How are prison shows put together? What are the implications for prison conduct, discipline, punishment or recidivism?' (Smith, 2015). However, Smith (2015) states that his conclusion is limiting as 'with only four pages to go, he tells us, it is possible that there is something inherent to Shakespeare's texts that contribute uniquely to the prison environment. "Possible"? "Something"? What? How? Why?' Pensalfini appears to excuse himself early when, at the start of the book, he outlines as a warning that 'readers who are already Shakespeare aficionados may find some sections elementary, perhaps too much so, while community and prison workers will find other sections of the book light going' (Pensalfini, 2016, p.ix).

Although his assessment of Shakespeare's work is not the most vigorous, his questioning of Shakespeare in the penal space is important. He unpicks the 'underlying assumption that anything of value that happens in a prison must be concerned with bringing about changes in the prisoners' (Pensalfini, 2016, p.2) and

moves onto highlight that there are much broader reaching benefits to the work ‘including bringing about changes in prisons and in attitudes towards prisoners and imprisonment’ (Pensalfini, 2016, p.2). His work offers an encompassing consideration of how Shakespeare’s use in penal environments might be questioned and suggests some of the challenges projects of this nature may need to face.

Shakespeare’s placement and use in prisons is a well-documented area of study. It is far-reaching and presents an area that has a good amount of research dedicated to its practice. Although a wide range of the publications explored reiterate the anecdotal, ‘taken-for-granted’ and assumptive beliefs regarding Shakespeare’s uses; it also demonstrates the popularity and purposes of this work. The work goes far to reference the impacts upon a range of participants involved and affected by the work. It appears as though this work is regarded as an important endeavour to develop and nurture (Bates, 2015; Scott-Douglass, 2007; Trounstine, 2007) and there may always be a place for Shakespeare’s use within prisons and with prisoners.

4.5. Shakespeare in therapeutic settings

Although Shakespeare is peripherally mentioned in relation to psychotherapy and healing in the books aforementioned, it is Cox, M. (ed.) (1992) *Shakespeare comes to Broadmoor: The performance of tragedy in a secure psychiatric hospital* where the reader is presented with an account of the putative ‘healing’ nature of Shakespeare’s work. This book represents the use of Shakespeare’s plays in therapeutic settings and provides a collection of essays by, or interviews with the different departments concerned with the productions of Shakespeare at Broadmoor hospital between 1989 and 1991. The publication also documents the delivery of several after-show talks and workshops and reflections of psychotherapists, actors, directors and patients.

The practitioners of the project present substantial claims for the impact of Shakespeare's use. Far more than a diversion or passing entertainment, the event is constructed as making a considerable contribution to Broadmoor's mission: 'to restore and rehabilitate those with broken minds' (Walt in Cox, 1992, p.19). Generally the benefits are highlighted as a result of an encounter with the cultural experience itself. Cox states, 'the opportunity of experiencing great drama in the heart of the hospital was an almost miraculous possibility for all those present' (Cox, 1992, p.9) and 'the performances were thus '"therapeutic" in the widest possible sense' (Cox, 1992, p.4). According to Cox, after an encounter with Shakespeare, readers or spectators are likely to experience the surroundings charged with meaning and even to 'see the world in a new way' (Theilgaard in Cox 1992, p.168). It is argued that because of 'Shakespeare's profound grasp of the human predicament and unequalled capacity to express what needs to be said' (Cox, 1992, p.163), he has an astonishing capacity to facilitate the therapeutic process and augment 'conventional clinical observation and discernment' (Cox, 1992, p.133). In this regard, his plays are argued to provide 'the dramatic equivalent of a colossal Rorschach inkblot test', as 'each reader confronted by separate alternatives, identifies where he must, and thereby pragmatically indicates his own sympathetic stance within the heteronomy of its suspended judgements' (Theilgaard in Cox, 1992, p.170). Beyond this, Shakespeare is presented as a considerable advantage to forensic psychotherapy's endeavour 'to facilitate the process through which unconscious material enters consciousness and is subsequently integrated and accepted by the patient' (Cox, 1992, p.255).

The critical perspective Cox draws upon is clear also from the analogy between psychotherapy and theatre. Cox (1992, p.172) explains that:

> ‘The universal human life is portrayed in Shakespeare’s plays as it is in therapeutic space. Even though the setting is different, both acting and therapy try to hold the mirror up to nature. . . . Shakespeare is an incomparable inspiration in therapeutic work, by reason of his deep knowledge of the mind, his poetic language . . . and his oscillation between concrete and abstract statements’.

The critical stance here is one founded in ‘feelings and honesty’ (McKellan in Cox, 1992, p.vii) rather than engagement with criticism and theory and no academic or drama critic has contributed to the book. However, it is clear to see how Shakespeare’s subject matter is held to be a means of identification and self-development for viewers and to provide an avenue into Broadmoor’s general psychotherapeutic mission. Shakespeare, it is argued, provides a means to facilitate ‘the confrontation with self’ (Cox, 1992, p.133). The book makes many assertions about Shakespeare’s significance, and also offers indication of idiosyncratic perspectives that can inform these kinds of projects. For example, for one of the contributors to the book, actor Mark Rylance, the appeal of the project is his sense that in Broadmoor he may find ‘brothers of Hamlet’ (Rylance in Cox, 1992, p.29) ‘people who really have experienced some of the things that we as actors pretend to do in plays’ (Rylance in Cox, 1992, p.27). In this regard, the inmates at Broadmoor promise to be ‘authentically’ Shakespearean. The publication attempts to link Shakespeare’s characters to the prisoner’s lives, but the work simultaneously promotes beliefs about Shakespeare’s work that is presumed rather than validated. Not only does the publication document a range of Shakespearean plays performed at the secure psychiatric facility and discuss these alongside the benefits believed to be provoked from the initiative, but it also highlights another example of where ‘taken-for-granted’ beliefs about Shakespeare’s works may be in operation.

Shakespeare's ability to promote psychotherapeutic healing is also found when consulting another of Cox's publications. Written with Thielgaard (1994) *Shakespeare as Prompter: The Amending Imagination and the Therapeutic Process* details the specific interrogation of Shakespeare and therapy and the assumed benefits therein. Cox presents Shakespeare's value in relation to therapy as twofold: on the one hand, 'Shakespeare can prompt therapeutic engagement with 'inaccessible' patients who might otherwise be out of therapeutic reach' (Cox & Theilgaard, 1994, p.3) and on the other, he 'can enlarge the therapist's options when formulating interpretations' because his image-laden and metaphorical language can be used to 'reach the deepest levels of experience' (Cox & Theilgaard, 1994, p.3). According to Cox and Theilgaard, there is a technical element to this: the imaginative precision of Shakespeare's poetry is such that it has the capacity to prompt clinical precision (Cox & Theilgaard, 1994, p.3) and stimulates 'the necessary collision with self' (Cox & Theilgaard, 1994, p.13). Cox and Theilgaard (1994, p.14) explain that Shakespeare's language is key to developing views of human nature and describe how:

> 'Our approach to Shakespeare is […] concerned with drawing out the latent energy in the particular stratum where Shakespearean language touches the language "of all sorts and conditions of men" –irrespective of education, social class, political affiliation, ethnic group or religious persuasion – when confronted by the universal depths of experience. By this we mean life in limited situations such as facing the stark choices between hating and loving, killing and being killed, causing loss or experiencing loss'.

Furthermore, according to Cox and Theilgaard (1994, p.6) Shakespeare not only speaks directly to repressed areas of experience, 'he enables us to discern and tolerate what integration demands of us'. Thus Shakespeare is constructed as having a considerable contribution to make to the general aim of psychotherapy, facilitating 'a

process in which the patient is enabled to do for himself what he cannot do on his own' (Cox & Theilgaard, 1994, p.3).

Walsh, Hughes and Linklater all suggest alternative reasons as to why Shakespeare is a relevant source to aid therapy. Linklater, K. (1993) *Freeing Shakespeare's Voice: The Actor's Guide to Talking the Text* argues that it is Shakespearean archetypes that offer therapeutic value. Linklater (1993, p.195) states that:

> 'because Shakespeare's stories are 'archetypal' they 'tell the stories of the everyday lives of millions of people who suffer painful effects of an unequal society, people who feel powerless in the face of random cruelty of poverty […] Shakespeare therapy takes place, then, because speaking Shakespeare leads us to the sources of our own power because we find a language which expresses the depths of our experience more fully, more richly, more completely than our own words can'.

Linklater's work is predominantly focussed upon analysing character's speech and rhythms which provide the tools to increase understanding and make Shakespeare's words one's own. She suggests that speaking Shakespeare's words alone is an aspect of therapy in itself, hence why Linklater dedicates her publications to the techniques we can use to vocalise Shakespeare's text.

Hughes, T. (1993) *Shakespeare and the Goodness of Complete Being* discusses how Shakespeare's work might be seen to operate as 'deep therapy'. Hughes states that 'moving between passion, thought, image, Shakespeare achieved a balanced and sudden perfect co-operation of both sides of the brain which constitutes a momentary restoration of 'perfect consciousness' (Hughes, 1993, p.265). Hughes (1993, p.265) continues that it is this:

> 'convulsive expansion of awareness, of heightened reality, of the real truth revealed, of obscure joy, of crowding indefinite marvels, a sudden

> feeling of solidarity with existence, with oneself, with others, with all the possibilities of being […] Shakespeare doesn't so much address the question of the human than the possibilities of being'.

Hughes work stands to explain the force of Shakespeare's plays and engages with therapeutic language in a manner which makes it difficult to avoid Shakespeare's therapeutic potential.

Walsh, F. (2012) *Theatre and Therapy* explains the reason Shakespeare's work is an important component to dramatherapy is due to the fact that many pioneers of therapeutic theory and technique looked to Shakespearean tragedy for inspiration (Walsh, 2012, p.5). He continues by suggesting that 'we cannot claim to know or understand Shakespeare's psychology just by reading or seeing *Hamlet*' (Walsh, 2012, p.11) we must explore him practically for the benefits of his work to be truly realised. This he explains is because 'when reading a text or observing a performance, we often find ourselves broaching questions of motivation, subtext, expression and feeling with psychological lexicon to aid understanding' (Walsh, 2012, p.16). Walsh explains that the reason why the form is beneficial is because the participant is allowed to identify with the character without putting himself in real physical danger, 'it is only a game which allows people to experience and process heightened emotions without significant risk and with no damage to his personal security' (Walsh, 2012, p.9). Although Walsh's point is debateable (see 2.2, 7.2) what is clear from his suggestion is that the work operates on simultaneous levels to benefit the participant, help confront issues; but also afford escapism when explored from a safe distance. Ultimately the work 'can illuminate and stimulate mental and emotional activity; those primary targets of therapeutic intervention' (Walsh, 2012, p.1). However this does not

necessarily explain the power of Shakespeare's work or his specific uses therapeutically.

Jacobs, M. (2008) *Shakespeare on the Couch* expands upon Walsh's work and offers a range of essays which discuss eight of Shakespeare's plays in relation to psychoanalytic approaches to the texts. Jacobs' work hinges around the idea that Shakespeare's therapeutic benefits lie in the fact that 'psychoanalysis has developed an enduring interest in literature [and his chapters] demonstrate how often Shakespeare's characters have informed or been informed by the case work of many analysts' (Jacobs, 2008, p.1).

One of the contributors J.I.M Stewart in his essay *Character and Motive in Shakespeare* (1949) argues against the literary critics 'who had dismissed many of Shakespeare's characters as mere fictions, and as behaving and reacting in a manner that is unreal' (Stewart in Jacobs, 2008, p.69). Drawing upon Freud and psychoanalytic ideas, Stewart suggests that the benefits of Shakespeare's work in relation to therapy can be identified in characters portraying traits that Freud's patients would also show. Jacobs critiques that Stewart is limited in his study for his 'arguments are straight down the line Freudian- there is no suggestion that he had read more widely in psychoanalytic literature' (Stewart in Jacobs, 2008, p.9), however, Stewart does touch upon the idea of character, reaction, and relationship and how all are helpful in therapeutic settings because of the contemporary nature in which the characters are created.

Jacobs questions whether the characters of the plays are 'true-to-life examples of different psychological states and types of relating; or as symbolic aspects of the personality' (Jacobs, 2008, p.160). He asks 'how real are the characters? How might

a therapist understand them if they were ‘on the couch’?’ (Jacobs, 2008, p.160). Jacobs (2008, p.3) concludes that some of the interpretations the reader will:

> ‘find fascinating, others too strained. Whatever the response, and this will vary from reader to reader, this approach has the potentiality to throw light on the reality of the situations that Shakespeare describes – in other words that they are not just written for dramatic effect’.

An altogether different account of Shakespeare’s benefits in the therapeutic setting can be found in Keidel, Davis, Gonzalez-Diaz, Martin, & Thierry scientific-based publication: *How Shakespeare Tempests the Brain: Neuro-imaging insight* (2013). The article explains how Scientists:

> ‘Used neuroimaging to study the brains of participants asked to read Shakespearean passages featuring functional shifts. In particular, the area of the brain associated with autobiographical memory was consistently stimulated in participants, leading the authors to conclude that after processing the meaning of the functional shift, participants attempted to relate the passage to events in their own lives’ (Keidel et al., 2013).[16]

Scientists found that the works ‘triggered moments of self-reflection, while giving a boost to morale’ (Keidel et al., 2013). Davis states that 'the research shows the power of literature to shift mental pathways, to create new thoughts, shapes and connections in the young and the staid alike' (Mail Online, 2013). This led to Philip Davis’ (2015) work into how Shakespeare can boost wellbeing.

As head of the centre for Research into Reading, Literature and Society (CRILS) at the University of Liverpool, Davis used an MRI scanner to:

> ‘Monitor the brain activity of volunteers as they read challenging texts belonging to Shakespeare. Scan results showed that the more

[16] Functional Shifts: a rhetorical device involving a change in the grammatical status of words, e.g., using nouns as verbs. Previous work using event-related brain potentials showed how FS triggers a surprise effect inviting mental re-evaluation, seemingly independent of semantic processing (Keidel et al., 2013).

> challenging poetic texts 'lit up' the volunteers' brains by their 'a-ha' moments of surprise – in a way that I'd describe as a 'rocket booster' – suggesting that literature can have a positive effect on the brain and trigger moments of emotional recognition, reappraisal of dull norms and an excited sense of new achievement – all at once' (Davis, 2015).

Both publications demonstrate a scientific interest regarding the uses of Shakespeare's work and establish the beginning of investigations into how science can help to validate the therapeutic possibilities found in literature generally.

The general and specific benefits of the use of Shakespeare's work within therapy have been considered throughout this section, and it is evident from the research that dialogue and debate surrounds this area of study. From academic interrogation to psychoanalytical exploration, the work is clearly an area of interest for drama practitioners, therapists, medical practitioners and academics and the work depicts a range of reasons to combine dramatherapy with Shakespeare's work. More than in any other setting considered, the research into Shakespeare's use in therapeutic settings appears to be work that is fundamentally about transformation therefore appearing to compliment most specifically with the intentions of applied theatre. Although some of the arguments and opinions are contested, the chapter showcases that this area of study is important and continues to progress. The thesis here purposefully aims to provide an overview of the most significant and progressive arguments, articulations and interrogations of the benefits attributed to the use of Shakespeare's work in therapeutic settings and aims to present an engagement with, and introduction to some of the main and overarching concepts and theories relevant to this area of study. It should be acknowledged that aside from the Shakespeare comes to Broadmoor project; there are no other publications that consider applied Shakespeare *projects* in this section of the review. Although there is engagement with

the reasons *why* Shakespeare can be used as a tool for therapy, the interrogations do not always suggest *where* exactly this is happening; highlighting an area for greater development and investigation. Considering there are vast amounts of reasons as to why Shakespeare's work is regarded as useful in therapy, it can only be a matter of time before more people explore where exactly this is or has been taking place, or undertake their own versions of the work because of the aforementioned benefits identified.

4.6 Shakespeare in Disability settings

At the time of submitting this thesis there appeared to be no specific publications regarding the use of Shakespeare's work amongst Disabled communities. The fact that there are no individualised explorations of the use of Shakespeare's work within the Disabled community restricts the developments and recommendations of this field. Aside from theatre companies generally discussing the benefits of Shakespeare's work, academic work is almost non-existent and therefore scholars seem slow to consider the benefits of Shakespeare's work within this area of practice and are very late in establishing this field. It has been difficult to investigate work of this nature which suggests that interrogation into this field is a recommendation for a future area of research. The importance of drawing attention to this is founded in being able to highlight the lack of interrogation into this area, subsequently highlighting an area of key contribution specific to this thesis.

Summary

This literature review focuses on some of the most relevant publications addressing the topic of the use of Shakespeare's work in applied theatre settings. In general terms

some of the texts included for investigation are more peripheral to the field, but do encompass justifications and articulate the benefits of presenting Shakespeare's work within a range of marginalised environments.

The review needed to widen the research area to not only address publications that explored specific projects (the *where*) but to address the justifications of the use of Shakespeare's work (the *why*); however all texts include or interrogate the use of Shakespeare's work in some way. Whilst the prison work is more focused on examples of texts that address *where* Shakespeare's work is used as a tool for transformation, the therapy work is saturated with explorations of *why.* There was a dearth of literature from which to extract, align and progress certain hypotheses relevant to this study and the publications on Disability are under-interrogated in both areas and highlight a significant gap in this field of study.

The work offered both anecdotal and descriptive accounts of the use of Shakespeare's work in applied settings (Dobson, 2011; Scott-Douglass, 2004; Cox, 1992) and relevant and progressive accounts of Shakespeare's uses (Pensalfini, 2016; Herold, 2014 & 2011, Charlebois in Shailor, 2010; Trounstine, 2007 & 2004; Boal, 2001; Kershaw, 1991). Analyses were also discovered covering a range of relevant critical, historical and political discourse relevant to this thesis (Herold: 2014; Ko, 2014; Charlebois in Shailor, 2011; Tofteland in Shailor, 2011; Trounstine, 2004). The limited interrogations that currently exist in regards to the challenges bound to the combination of Shakespeare's plays and applied theatre settings highlights a gap in the research that this thesis hopes to address.

Chapter Five: Prison Shakespeare

> **Angelo:** …I do not deny,
> The jury, passing on the prisoner's life.
> May in the sworn twelve have a thief or two
> Guiltier than him they try; …What know the laws,
> That thieves do pass on thieves? 'Tis very pregnant,
> The jewel that we find, we stop and take it,
> Because we see it; but what we not see,
> We tread upon and never think of it
>
> (Shakespeare, 1991, 2.1, p76)

The following chapters address how and where Shakespeare's work is used within penal environments. The chapter begins with an exploration of the history of prison theatre generally, and then moves into an interrogation of the challenges of prison theatre specifically. Here the work addresses challenges between freedom and incarceration, performance and punishment, and theatre as an alternative response to crime. The chapter then addresses the use of Shakespeare's work in penal environments specifically, where it currently exists and the articulated benefits of combining the two areas of practice. Each section then explores the importance of interrogating Shakespeare's plays in the intellectual tradition in which they were written. For prison Shakespeare, *Measure for Measure* and *Macbeth* are used as demonstrative texts. Finally the chapter concludes with a case study analysis of the Education Shakespeare Company as an example of a community who uses Shakespeare's work for the purposes of transformation. The work will explore how the company articulates the benefits of using Shakespeare's work to transform their participants, and analyses challenges that may ensue in the application of Shakespeare alongside a marginalised community.

The chapters ask:

- What challenges are posed in theatre attempting to access marginalised communities?

- What values and notions about humanity might Shakespeare depict/ promote through his work?

- What kind of critical attitudes, values and/or assumptions are bound up with this work and/or promoted through it?

- What challenges might prison theatre face when combining Shakespeare with the intentions of applied theatre?

5.1 The history of prison theatre

Prison theatre represents a variety of arts-based programmes with criminal offenders and 'a repeated theme in the discourse on theatre practice in prisons can be summarised as theatre and drama projects [that] have a positive effect on those incarcerated and may contribute towards rehabilitation' (Keehan, 2015, p.391). Many believe that the incarcerated need opportunities in prison to improve themselves therefore prison theatre is regarded as an alternative method of rehabilitation and as an alternative response to crime (see 5.2.5). Ultimately prison theatre is viewed as:

> 'impacting recidivism by giving the incarcerated vital life skills, transforming them on a social and personal level and by instilling hope and a feeling of worth with the aim that these individuals leave prison with a new outlook on life, a new motivation, and an assured sense of self' (Donham, 2016).

Generally prison theatre has been documented as showing how exposure to the arts can benefit its participants, "it provides a place of sanctuary', 'a crucible for transformation', and an 'effective vehicle for (re)integration into society" (Shailor,

2011). It may help with issues of self-worth, confidence and empowerment (Jermyn, 2001). It can help contribute to the development of an inmate's self-expression and exploration (Liebmann, 2009) and can play a role in improving their motivation, social and life skills (Langelid et.al, 2009).

Historically, the use of theatre as either recreation or rehabilitation in a prison context dates to be over two centuries old (Pensalfini, 2016). The Australian convict theatres of the late 18th and early 19th centuries provide clear and historical evidence of theatre's role in a penal environment (Pensalfini, 2016). In the 20th century, the prison's applied theatre movement is argued to have begun in 1957 with Herb Blau's production of *Waiting for Godot* at San Quentin Prison, California. There is also 'evidence of prison theatre and art work during the Second World War, or performances in concentration camps, in ghettos, in internment camps and in the community Gulags' (Balfour, 2001: Berghaus, 1996: Jelavitch, 1993: Berghaus & Wolff, 1989: Solzhenitsyn, 1975). The oldest prison project still running in the UK is Clean Break Theatre, formed in 1979 by two female prisoners in Askham Grange, UK (Pensafini, 2016). The largest prison theatre project in the UK is represented by Geese Theatre Company of which Clark Baim was the founder and first director. To date there are over 30 theatre companies in the UK providing theatre training and productions for inmates (Pensalfini, 2016) including, but not limited to: Synergy Theatre Project, Theatre in Prison and Probation (TIPP), Playing for Time, Kestrel Theatre Company, Escape Artists, Clean Break Theatre Company and Open Clasp Theatre Company. Although the companies presented here do not necessarily use Shakespeare's plays; some have included Shakespeare's plays within their work (Landy, 2011: Balfour, 2004).

5.2 The challenges of prison theatre

Prison theatre often presents inherent contradictory values to that of an applied theatre format, which is often provoked because of the complicated terrain of the penal environment itself. These complications demand interrogation as any practitioner hoping to incite change needs to be aware of the challenging environment in which they are creating work. The investigation here will allow the thesis to explore what types of critical attitudes, values and/or assumptions are bound up with this work and what challenges the penal community may face when combining prison with the intentions of applied theatre.

Although the thesis recognises the benefits in engaging with a prison theatre programme (Pensalfini, 2016: Bates, 2015: Trounstine, 2007: Scott-Douglass, 2007; see 4.3.1), the exploration of such challenges allows the thesis to more carefully interrogate and question the contradictions that are inherent in the work and whether they may prevent it from realising its transformative intentions.

5.2.1 Freedom vs. incarceration

One of the greatest complications for any applied theatre endeavour in a penal environment is the binary between the ‘freedom’ the artistic project professes to accomplish alongside the prison’s ultimate goal of ‘incarceration’ (Barnes, 2015: Cohen-Cruz & Schulzman, 2002: Foucault, 1969). It is a complicated tension between the workings and purpose of the prison context against the intentions and ambitions of an artistic programme. Kershaw (2004, p.38), in looking at ‘how theatre works within the structures of prison and the wider discourses of criminology, asks how can the practices of drama and theatre best engage with these systems in order to create a space of radical freedom?’

Imprisonment ultimately works by arranging an individual's experience of space and time, 'timetables and military drills, and the process of exercise' (Foucault, 1969, p.125). It is a regulation of bodies and activities, the structuring of days and of expectations, and the marshalling of these towards what is regarded as socially productive ends, used as tools to which the body's 'operations can be controlled' (Foucault, 1969, p.145). Applied Theatre however aims to 'forge a little bit of freedom to challenge authority' (Barnes, 2015, p.162), providing its participants an opportunity to engage with praxis and pedagogy concerned with the type of emancipation imagined by Friere and Boal.

The binary between freedom and incarceration links back to and simultaneously separates and aligns the understandings of transformation presented by Foucault and Boal. Although their separate considerations of transformation add to the contradictions found within this work, their considerations surrounding systems of power, which have a role in the capturing of transformation, are interestingly aligned. Foucault's consideration of transformation is bound to practices of power in the penal environment. He explores the manner in which someone essentially free (in mind rather than physically free) is made to do something they would not always necessarily do. Although the purpose may be a social one, Foucault questions whether a non-violent, non-confrontational attempt to achieve transformation actually serves the purpose that it claims. The systems of observation, examination, and placing a set of normative upon a prisoner for judgement were deemed by Foucault to be alternative forms of disciplinary measures. Foucault (1991, p.197) states:

> 'This enclosed, segmented space, observed at every point, in which the individuals are inserted in a fixed place, in which the slightest movements are supervised, in which all events are recorded, in which an uninterrupted work of writing links the centre and periphery, in which

> power is exercised without division, according to a continuous hierarchical figure, in which each individual is constantly located, examined and distributed among the living beings, the sick and the dead- all this constituted a compact model of the disciplinary method'.

For Foucault transformation is therefore regarded as a thing bound to incarceration, coercive and repressive but also necessary and productive, if transformation is to be achieved. Although Foucault indicates that 'power should not be understood as exclusively oppressive but as productive; and can constitute discourse and knowledge' (Foucault, 1991, p.119) he also helps to question how power is being negotiated, how individuals are being 'transformed', and whether transformation can ever be truly, honestly, and credibly for the prisoner's benefit.

Boal on the other hand presents his idea of transformation as an escape from power and the controlling regimes; a talking back to power in the form of imagined fictional worlds and reflective spaces. However Boal, like Foucault, also warns of the continued power controlling regimes can have upon a participant and recognises (in a similar manner to Foucault) that power cannot always be separated from the achievement of transformation. Boal alludes here to how power can control the mind and discusses the idea of 'Cops-in-the-head' (Boal & Epstein, 1991) and its continued role in transforming an individual. 'Cops-in-the-head', by its very name, suggests that 'the world is filled with instructions that are imprinting authoritarian fantasies' (Cohen-Cruz & Schultzman, 2002, p.5), based upon the internalisation of one's oppression. That although an individual may seemingly believe they have freedom, the oppression they were made to feel is so ingrained within their psyche that their oppressions are internalised and able to control the individual subliminally. Even upon release from the confines of prison the cops-in-the-head are still working after the prisoner is physically

freed. Although it is suggested that these transformative messages are of value to the prisoner, if you measure this work by how it impacts the institution instead, the benefits are vast. Not only can it provide the opportunity to conform, co-operate and respect authority (Scott-Douglass, 2007), but it parades itself in the mask of helping the individual feel transformed.

The intentions of transformation within a prison environment can result in the promotion of a culturally dogged tradition, encompassing the prisoners within a universality which is:

> ‘less to do with making prisoners aware of their failings, and actively producing a kind of subject who could be identified, and treated, as a prisoner… producing docile, healthy bodies that can be utilised in work and regulated in terms of time and space’ (Foucault, 1969, p.49).

Therefore the prison is part of a network of control that is directly influenced by society and is controlled by their rules. When combining applied formats with penal settings, theatre is in danger of being utilised as a tool to affect modes of imprisonment. Therefore the freedom and transformation promised by applied theatre is difficult to achieve.

Observation and the gaze of an authority are also key instruments in the binary between freedom and incarceration, as it ‘aims both to deprive the individual of his freedom and to reform him’ (Foucault, 1969, p.53). The gaze of authority progresses something tangible as it is part of a complex set of ruling intentions that desire control over its participants. As Foucault explains, this may be because ‘the best way to manage prisoners is to make them the potential targets of the authority’s gaze’ (Foucault, 1969, p.54). Therefore by affording the prisoners the opportunity to participate in the work, the prisoners become more observable. The prisoners watched

more closely under the guise of an initiative that promises a type of freedom, are instead governed by a particular type of power and control. Balfour (2004, p.7) questions whether prison projects, of any nature, are at risk of doing the same warning us of the fine line a theatre practitioner must walk, little more than ‘a knife's edge between resistance to, and incorporation into, the status quo' of the criminal justice system’.

There is an inherent complication within specific cultures, like that of a prison, where control is in direct opposition to the space of freedom. In this way, the prison projects are part of a complex social, cultural and economic context which frame the concept of imprisonment and traverse a dual purpose between the boundaries of freedom and transformation and the implementation of incarceration. Ultimately, any project that aims to combine freedom with incarceration may be faced with a similar challenge.

5.2.2 Performance and punishment

Often punishment is about many things: ‘crime control, public security, the restoration of social relationships, retribution, reformation and rehabilitation’ (McAvinchey, 2011, pp.18-21). Drama is not only used to ‘re-socialize’ or ‘rehabilitate’ the prisoner but can also and simultaneously act as an extension of the performance of punishment for the offender (Thompson, 2004). Therefore, the criminal justice system has a complex relationship with performance, and the performances *in* prison may be very similar to the performance *of* prison, as Balfour (2004, p.27) explains how:

> ‘punishment, penalty, retribution, transformation and toughness all play out as different forms of performance. This service explicitly uses performance techniques to display and shame but describes them within the largely familiar discourse of prisoner rehabilitation’.

The performance of punishment is evident too in the breaking down of the prisoner to build him/her back up as a construct of what society deems appropriate. The prison makes the prisoner what they need him to be. This is a system 'that de-individualises the criminal, to break down the body and mind, to strip the self into component parts and then reconstruct it, re-socialise it with a new role and a learnt script to the satisfaction of the taxpaying public and policy maker' (Thompson, 2004, p.60). This method asks the prisoners to invest in a new, 'acceptable' identity decided upon by the prison and its constructs. The prisoner is 'asked to join the social morality which seeks the rules for acceptable behaviour in relation to others, to prove suffering, to show shame, to make visible humility and exhibit modesty- these are the main features of self-transformation' (Foucault, 1969, p.15). The prisoner's obedience may not be based on their desire for self-transformation but upon a projected desire by the prison 'for self-improvement, which must bear on all aspects of the prisoner's life' (Foucault, 1969, p.15).

'Acceptable' may also be in the form of the offender offering an apology for a crime. In the performance of the apology, complicated notions of how to gauge the reliability, sincerity and truthfulness arise. Spinner-Halev (2012, p.99) questions 'how the practitioner can ascertain if the apology is sincere? In the sense that there is a real desire to change the behaviour that allows the injustice to endure?' With agendas abound to this work the offenders may make an apology for their crime, claim they have changed and are transformed, but only to please and appease those promising a range of rewards. This questions whether, 'if in fact they are sorry, to what extent does this verbal apology bear witness to a lifelong determination to resist involvement in criminal activity?' (Cox, n.d., p.8). The answer to this question is particularly difficult

to ascertain, considering that evidence suggests that there is limited proof of impact on recidivism.

Alongside the complications surrounding who decides what is ‘acceptable’ and how ‘acceptable’ is identified, Thompson (2004, p.63) questions who the audience applauds when the ‘acceptable’ is achieved asking ‘does the performance therefore serve as a testimony of the offender’s rehabilitation, or is it the boast of a system that promises to tame them?’ If the work is a construct of the environment, and the performance an extension of the punishment, then it is relevant to question who has the authority of the work, its success, its impacts and its transformative outcomes. The notion is held around the possibility that spectators of the changed behaviour may praise the ability of the theatre practitioner to reform the offender, rather than congratulate the prisoners for any personal efforts made to change: ‘does the performance therefore serve as a testimony of the offender’s rehabilitation, or is it the boast of a system that promises to tame them?’ This links to agenda-driven incentives, power roles, and complex taxonomies bound to the environment (Thompson, 2004, p.63; see 3.1.4).

An overarching difficulty is in distinguishing *what* exactly needs to be ‘performed’ whilst keeping in mind the perspective influencing this ‘performance’. This is linked to complications when trying to assess and measure the impacts and outcomes of the projects. Khutan (2014, p.88) explains that:

> ‘whilst the work satisfies the funders and policymakers through the provision of quantifiable data and outputs, it cannot guarantee or clearly demonstrate that change took place, and that the knowledge and skills gained will make a difference in behaviour, either in the short or long term’.

As a result there is currently limited evidence of subsequent lower rates of offending (Hughes, 2008: Falshaw et al, 2003: Moller, 2003: Duguid & Pawson, 1998). Although 'the emphasis is rehabilitation and preparation for life after prison, where, it is hoped, people won't reoffend' (McAvinchey, 2011, p.78), analysis suggests that the projects may be more beneficial in their ability to control the prisoner when they are serving time, than in transforming them ready for their release and sustained existence outside the confines of the prison. Khutan (2014, p86-87) reveals that:

> 'a number of studies have examined the use of applied theatre practice to address disciplinary problems only […] the literature also reveals evidence of how drama can reduce tension and violence and can enhance relationships between custodial staff and prisoners'.

Therefore, the outcomes and impacts are problematic, they appear:

> 'short-term, lacking in conceptual and methodological rigour, over-reliant on anecdotal evidence, unable to adequately specify, quantify or explain outcomes, or to demonstrate clear causal connections between participation in the arts and positive outcome' (Hughes, 2008, p.13).

Understanding who exactly benefits from a prisoner's 'performance' is therefore complicated. It offers an important reminder regarding the 'critical awareness of the politics of this practice, the funding bodies which support it and the institutions which enable it' (McAvinchey, 2011, p.79), referencing work that has many people to please and appease. The discourse suggests there are complex negotiations which need to be made when one engages with these projects and within these environments. How the prison project can promise change and how change is assessed, measured and 'performed', will remain difficult and findings suggest that the prisoners, by engaging with the work, may be simply fulfilling a requirement of their sentence.

5.2.5 Theatre: an alternative response to crime

The preconceived notions of how punishment should be delivered are tied up with complex understandings of the legal system, crime, punishment and a prisoner's relationships with their own incarceration. As Boonin (2008, p3) notes:

> 'legal punishment involves treating those who break the law in ways that it would be wrong to treat those who do not, for example […] the state's imposition of monetaryfines, forced incarceration, bodily su ffering, and–in extreme cases–death'.

If a prison project defies these expectations then it is open to a criticism which likens the field to leisure that many think should be withheld from the offenders (Thompson, 1998).

There are two divergent public views towards punishment. Bindinotto (in Thompson, 1998, p.11) 'considers prison theatre as an absurd privilege which may actually contribute to the crime problem' and Hughes (in Thompson, 1998, p.50) observes how 'initial projects (at HMP Styal) were difficult […] because of the hostility of prison staff who considered drama projects as an inappropriate luxury'. However ex-offender and author, Hassine (in Thompson, 1998, p.65) disagrees stating that:

> 'Theatre performance in prison is much more than entertainment; it is a point of view or an important lesson that can be learned by the many who cannot read or write. The only more effective way to convey new thoughts and ideas in a prison is to have inmates perform them'.

Stalans (2002, p.15) makes for a more diplomatic exploration of the two camps of contradictory thought, he explains:

> 'on the one hand, several findings support the idea of a punitive public that demands long prison terms […] (T)he public believes that, in

> general, courts are too lenient in their sentencing patterns […] at the same time, there is an image of a merciful public that supports rehabilitation, community-based sentences and less severe sentences than the law allows'.

Ultimately, some see the programmes as 'high culture', others see it as entertainment, but what is evident is that the work is heavily reliant upon 'widespread belief in fairness and effectiveness, otherwise [prisons themselves] would eventually cease to function' (Indemaur & Hough, 2002, p.198). There is a fine line between work that is deemed transformative and work that is viewed as a prisoner 'escaping hard time'. This can be potentially damaging to the view of the penal environment itself implying that many may wish to disassociate with the field of work. This is heavily reliant upon what Thompson (in McAvinchey, 2011, p.xi) terms 'the public acceptability test', explaining how he 'tried to convince people in garage forecourts or motorway service stations why, as far as [he] was concerned, theatre and prisons did have a connection'. It is difficult to fight to prove how theatre could be offered as an alternative and relevant response to crime. Public perceptions play an important role in the work and there is an increased demand for practitioners to prove the impact of their work not just to the offenders and the prisons, but to their families and the wider public, which is also reflected in the desire to offer quantitative and qualitative results (e.g. Lower rates of recidivism–quantitative, increased confidence-qualitative (Jones, 2010)). Despite wider acceptance of prison as an opportunity to promote rehabilitation (Caraher, Dixon & Hayton, 2002: Caraher, Bird & Hayton, 2000: Smith, 2000) 'the tensions between the correctional and rehabilitative aspects of being in prison continue to this day' (Khutan, 2014, p.57), with a divide between those who are advocacies for the work and those who still need convincing that the work has value and worth.

From the research, many an academic have discussed the complexities incited by working in the context of theatre and prison (McAvinchey, 2011: Hughes, 2008: Balfour, 2004: Heritage, 2002: Thompson, 1998) outlining how the boundaries between applied theatre and prison remain complicated, questionable and riddled with tension. This is due to the overarching context and ideology of what a penal environment represents which may often be in opposition to the aims and ambitions of an applied theatre project, and its desire to achieve transformation. Complications and contradictions need to be continuously interrogated in relation to this field in order for it to develop, progress and impact. This suggests that the format of prison theatre itself may have as much to do with evoking challenges in achieving transformation, as the addition of Shakespeare's work may further deprive.

5.3 The history of Shakespeare in prison

With world conferences, publications, journal articles and a range of varied projects dedicated to this area of practice; Shakespeare has a long and now established role within penal settings (Pensalfini, 2016: Shailor, 2011: McAvinchey, 2011: Balfour, 2004: Thompson, 1998).

The specific performances and/or projects that include Shakespeare's work in penal settings are mostly recent with recorded origins in the 1980's (Balfour, 2004). Pensalfini (2016, p.85) states:

> 'since the seminal Prison Shakespeare projects in the 1980's and 1990's, the phenomenon has grown to where performances of Shakespeare's plays by prisoners are annual occurrence in many parts of the world […] however, it was not until 2013 that prison Shakespeare practitioners came together under their own banner, at a two-day conference held at Notre Dame University in Indiana […] and Prison Shakespeare emerged'.

The thesis recognises that this field is very changeable with new projects beginning and old projects coming to their end. Shakespeare in penal settings has now become so expansive that, as Pensalfini (2016, p.14) reflects:

> 'Every time I thought I had all of the materials […] I learned about some new article or review, or a new project would emerge that I had not investigated, [since starting the research] several new Prison Shakespeare projects will probably have emerged and some become defunct'.

This thesis attempts to suggest and reference some of the major programmes currently in existence (predominantly in the UK and USA), which have shaped the field and developed this area of study.

In 1984 Cicely Berry, in collaboration with the RSC, was invited to Her Majesty's Prison Dartmoor in order 'to make a film in the prison based on *Julius Caesar'* (Pensalfini, 2016, p.18). Pensalfini (2016, p.25) documents that 'Berry was interested in taking Shakespeare into prisons to see whether prisoner's responses to his heightened language might help them to become more articulate about their own ideas and feelings'. The project involved the prisoners and guards devising a tale about the early life of Caesar (Pensalfini, 2016), however, 'due to the lack of funding the project was not completed until 2012 when *String Caesar* was filmed in prisons in South Africa, Wales, and Canada' (Pensalfini, 2016, p.27). Although Berry's work did not culminate in a performance by the prisoners, her work represents one of the earliest examples of Shakespeare's use within the penal field with the aim of helping prisoners progress or transform (Pensalfini, 2016).

The United States were close to follow Berry with their first Shakespeare prison project led by Jean Trounstine. Her projects ran in Framingham (MA) Women's Prison,

Massachusetts from 1988 to 1998. This led to her accompanying publication *Shakespeare behind bars: One Teacher's story of the power of drama in a women's prison* (2007). According to Trounstine (2004, p.72), 'self-realisation and personal growth is a by-product of engagement with Shakespeare's plays. Shakespeare provides the potential for better experiences that hopefully will be the way to better lives'. She states that Shakespeare can help prisoners believe more deeply in their abilities and help create a community where they value themselves (Trounstine, 2004, p.72). Her work represents an important example of Shakespeare's use within a penal environment and, when referring to her accompanying text, promotes an awareness of the politics to which this work is bound.

The Shakespeare Behind Bars programme (SBB) (formerly known as Books Behind Bars) began as a prison programme in Kentucky in 1991 by Dr Curtis Bergstrand. It now represents one of the longest running, most established and developed Shakespeare in prison programmes throughout the world (Scott-Douglass, 2007: Thompson, 1998). In 1993 Curt Tofteland (then the Producing Artistic Director of the Kentucky Shakespeare Festival) was invited to introduce Shakespeare's plays to the programme. The programme began as a small project, never intending to be shared with a public audience, but became an independent programme in 1995, with the company meeting nine months of the year to work on material. From 2003–2008 the company toured to other prisons and performances are still being created today. Many have written about the company. Scott-Douglass focuses the majority of her publication *Shakespeare Inside: The Bard Behind Bars* (2007) on the SBB program at the Luther Luckett Correctional complex. Throughout the publication a lot of emphasis is placed upon the redemptive power of Shakespeare. Scott-Douglass discusses the ways in which SBB use Shakespeare's works to provide 'one of the most positive

impacts on recidivism', (Scott-Douglass, 2007, p.98) his plays providing 'more than a welcome distraction from the tedium, deprivation and dangers of prison life' (Scott-Douglass, 2007, p.129). Ultimately, SBB provides an example of one of the longest serving and producing Shakespeare in prison projects to date.

The Shakespeare in Shackles program ran by Dr Laura Bates is a unique program that focuses on prisoners in Solitary Confinement in the Pendleton Correctional Facility at Indiana Federal Prison, a Level 4 maximum-security prison. Bates, an English professor at Indiana State University, expanded her programme into other prisons in the state and across the USA. She continues to teach Shakespeare's 'criminal tragedies' to the prisoners to help with 'skills such as communication and comprehension, as well as analysis, critical thinking, and looking at issues and characters from multiple perspectives. Bates (2015) believes that 'education is pivotal in helping released prisoners reintegrate into society'. Bates believes in the redemptive powers of studying Shakespeare and her work provides an example of maximum security prisoners, and life-serving offenders who interact with Shakespeare's work. Although Bates' work does not necessarily have an impact on prisoner's reintegration back into society (as they are serving a life sentence), she believes that it has an impact on their approach to their time in confinement. The project foregrounds the benefits of the work, and continues to believe in the transformative opportunities an encounter with Shakespeare's work may incite.

These examples foreground some of the leading projects within this practice. From the examples presented, the scope and expanse of the work is evident. Shakespeare's work has been used across a wide range of penal settings and with a diverse range of prisoners, from those serving short sentences to those incarcerated for life. What

all of these projects appear to have in common is a desire for the work to promote transformation amongst its participants through the exploration of Shakespeare's works. These opportunities continue to appeal to applied theatre practitioners and highlight Shakespeare's continued use within projects of this nature.

5.4 Shakespeare's prison, prison Shakespeare: a Renaissance reading of Shakespeare's prisons (through the play *Measure for Measure*)

Generally, Shakespeare was writing plays that depict prison and law enforcement as a reflection of the penal system in operation during the 17th century. Imprisonment was not a punishment; it was a waiting room or holding area whilst prisoners were brought to trial, the punishment was decided, or they were released. Time served in prison had no set limit and people in this space often died of starvation or the cold (Salgado, 1977, p.170), from poor exercise or sanitation (Dobb, 1964, p.98). Sentences and punishments, when they were finally decided were various, but often brutal. Mullan (2016) highlights that 'the audiences for whom Shakespeare wrote his plays were used to seeing punishments inflicted on offenders against the law'. Punishment from arrest, imprisonment, and to penalty was very much at the heart of Renaissance life with flogging, branding, stoning, mutilation and whipping being common, corporeal, and public (McAvinchey, 2011). This is seen throughout a range of Shakespeare's plays:

> '*Macbeth* opens with Thane of Cawdor being accused of treason and sentenced to death without trial. Lady Macduff affirms that traitors "must be hanged". In *The Winter's Tale* and *The Twelfth Night*, the characters mention the practice of boiling a convict in oil or lead. Drowning is mentioned in *The Tempest*, and hanging appears in *All's Well that Ends Well*, *Henry IV*, and *The Merry Wives of Windsor*. Restrain and humiliation is mentioned in *The Taming of the Shrew, Measure for Measure,* and *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, and other types of punishment documented in Shakespeare's work include the wheel, stocks, the press, whipping, branding, the wisp, and defacement' (ShakespeareMag, 2013).

Specifically, Shakespeare was also writing his plays around the time when law; its intentions, purposes and science were being more thoroughly explored, and when 'English society in the 17th century found itself in a phase of transition between two penal systems: the system/age of terror (punishment of the body), and the system/age of confinement (punishment of the soul)' (Werkman, 2015, p.6). Werkman (2015, pp.7-9) explains that:

> 'The new system made an end to the autonomy of the monarch and started a new method of investigation and judgment; and punishment such as torture disappeared and instead were related to the body in a different manner such as imprisonment, confinement, forced labour, penal servitude, prohibition from entering certain areas, and deportation; the main object of punishment now was no longer the body but the soul of the convict; […] the aim of the punishment was to correct the wrong inflicted on society, but also to punish just enough to avoid repetition'.

The terms of confinement and terror were initially termed by Foucault in his seminal text *Surveiller et Punir: Naissance de la Prison* (1975) and is important to acknowledge in line with Foucault's general consideration of the prison and concepts of power (see 5.2.2).[17] However, it is important to remember that Foucault's analysis is an historical reading depicting certain patterns at a particular time in history (18th century) and Shakespeare's plays are literary texts not completely based on reality and influenced by a different time in history (17th century). Werkman (2015, p.15) warns that 'this combination can indicate an anachronistic situation in which ideas and perspectives of the 20th century on the 18th century are used to interpret the 17th century'. However the justification behind combining Foucault's terms with a reading of Shakespeare's

[17] Foucault also analyses 17th century Europe's torture upon a criminal's body and how this mode of punishment gradually gave way to a more humanitarian penal system with different disciplinary mechanisms.

plays can be found in the argument that, although the major changes to the philosophy and practice of punishment upon criminals happened after Shakespeare wrote his plays, in the 18th century, it is important to reference that the desire for change in law and its enforcement in the 17th century could very easily have had an influence upon Shakespeare's desire to write this play. In this way the play selected for this chapter is to be analysed in reference to the historical and cultural events reflected in the 17th century, and supported by Foucault's understanding of the subsequent changes that were made in the 18th century to highlight more specifically the 17th century as a time of judicial transition and unrest. By not reading Shakespeare's plays through this historical context, the historical traditions surrounding the time in which the play was originally created, against the changes to the legal system that were subsequently made, may go unnoticed (Wilson, n.d.).

The shift during the early 1600's saw an important move away from the power to punish, to a deeper consideration of mercy and justice. The cause of transition and the manner in which Shakespeare's work reflects upon it is an important consideration to make in order to explore Shakespeare's reactions to the penal system that was in existence at the time in which he was creating his work.

The chapter that follows will examine Shakespeare's presentation of prison and punishment throughout the play *Measure for Measure*. It will explore Shakespeare's presentation of justice and its uncertainties, and changing law and law enforcement in reference to the penal system of the 17th century to which Shakespeare may have been reacting. It is *Measure for Measure*, a play that operates around the uncertainties of justice that perhaps most closely shows us the purpose of prisons during Shakespeare's time. The prison Shakespeare presents 'shows the workings of a

prison- the presentation of warrants, the preparations for execution […] and the prison has sucked in all of the diseases that float in the surrounding cesspool of Vienna' (Knowles, 2002, p.64).

Regarded as a problem play generally, the biggest complication surrounds the idea that no one really knows what the best or most just decisions are and therefore the uncertainties of justice, its potential subjectivity and elevation of judgement, promotes the ambiguities of the legal system through the choices the characters make throughout the play. This is a play of antithesis and the characters themselves become personifications of the problems and questions addressed throughout. The play ultimately attempts to show what an ineffectual justice system can do to the people who live by its rules and demonstrates how people wanted change (Werkman, 2015).

The play predominantly focuses upon the application of sexual law to demonstrate the inefficiencies and confusions in regards to justice and its enforcement. The application of the law throughout the play is regulated by the absurd sentencing of Claudio to death for his practice of pre-marital sexual activities. Claudio is deprived of procedural right in relation to his access to a counsel for his defence or the following of the due process of law, which Foucault (1969, p.21) highlights as 'an element of the old system, since the changes in the new model saw the influence of advisers in jurisdiction'. It is Angelo's precise enforcement of sexual law, his strict temper and stricter rule that provokes a confused response from the people of Venice, as highlighted in the exchange between Pompey and Mistress Overdone:

> ***Pompey:*** Yonder man is carried to Prison.
> ***Mistress Overdone:*** Well! What has he done?
> ***Pompey:*** A woman.

> ***Mistress Overdone:*** But what's his offence?
> ***Pompey:*** Groping for trout in a peculiar river
>
> (Shakespeare, 1991, 1.2, p.73).

The existing complex rule of sexual law asks Angelo to judge Claudio through a specific enforcement of punishment. In Renaissance England, church and state struggled to control sexuality and it is documented that 'the ecclesiastical courts tried so many cases of sexual offences like prostitution and bastardy that they were called the 'bawdy courts' (Bawdy Courts, n.d.). Constables could bring to court anyone they felt to be a suspect of sexual crime, as Elbow does with Pompey. Those accused of sexual deviance could not escape punishment simply by marrying, and as Angelo does with Claudio, offenders would undergo penance and public humiliation. Although death was not often the final punishment, whipping until blood was drawn would be used.

Claudio's punishment is one of the most complicated issues present throughout the play. Legally he has fornicated outside of wedlock and Juliet carries his bastard child. However socially, he is betrothed to Juliet, she is his fiancée and they are promised to each other in marriage. Although Claudio's fate throughout the play may appear to a modern audience as extreme, the ambiguities surrounding marriage at the time in which Shakespeare was writing may in fact play a role in Angelo's exercise of the sexual law. According to Sokol & Sokol (2003, p14):

> 'The fact that no specific language existed to confirm marriage merely added to the ambiguity. A variety of signs, not all of them even verbal, was accepted as sufficient to indicate the existence of this consenting state. Not surprisingly, there were often difficulties in the interpretation of such signs'.

Therefore the interpretation of whether a marriage exists is rendered from a subjective judgement. Angelo does not follow the 'law precisely; he is instead rendering a subjective judgment on an act that may or may not even constitute a crime' (Funk, 2012, p.17). Marriage is an interesting device to not only make commentary on marriage as an institution dogged with confusion, but a commentary upon law in general and its ambiguities and uncertainties in the consideration of justice. Ingram (1987, p.133) explains that:

> 'the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries—the era in which Shakespeare wrote—constituted "an uneasy transition period" for marriage law: despite widespread acceptance of church marriage and the decline of spousals even as a preliminary to ecclesiastical solemnization, the fact that an informal contract could still create a binding union entailed uncertainty, moral ambiguities and opportunities for deceit and fraud'.

Therefore, Shakespeare depicts 'Angelo's understanding and practice of the law to reveal the inconsistency at its core' (Sokol & Sokol, 2003, p.15).

Although marriage or engagement represents the conclusion of the play its impacts are far from positive, from Isabella's silence in reaction to the Duke's proposal (Intezar, 2013), Angelo's commitment to Mariana, to the reunion and subsequent marriage between Claudio and Juliet, all appear as unstable, confusing and contradictory conclusions to fix the problems presented throughout the play. Although marriage for Claudio and Juliet had been their desired goal from the start, their marriage now appears unstable in relation to the legal judgements surrounding it and point again to the complicated nature of the law that punishes crime and the corrupt use of power residing in those that judge crime. Shakespeare asks the audience to question whether the law should be incited 'to the letter', or whether it should take account of the special characteristics and extenuating circumstances of each offender. The play

in this way can be read as work that questions whether the law could be making better judgements in its consideration of punishment as a way to ameliorate crime.

If Angelo is to be seen as a metaphorical representation of the law in place during Shakespeare's time, then he depicts its corruption and right-wing asceticism. He is a manifestation of the age of terror and bodily punishment and Shakespeare is perhaps suggesting the need for a more considered approach regarding both the crime and the criminal, represented to some degree in Duke Vincentio and his left-wing liberalism. The Duke is therefore a manifestation of the age of confinement and as Werkman (2015, p.22) summarises:

> 'Angelo clearly represents the old system through his excessive use of power, corruption and distance to his people. The Duke however, represents the new system of surveillance, mercy, and his exercises of power of the lives of his subjects instead of their death'.

Claudio is used as an example by Angelo, but his corrupt application of using Claudio to teach Vienna a lesson appears to be more about social control (e.g. the idea that Claudio's punishment is used to incite fear in the minds of others, links to cops-in-the head see 5.2.1) rather than the application of a clear legal process. Depriving Claudio access to considered punishment results in confusion. The level of suffering inflicted on the offender and the lessons this speaks 'to the many is not by itself a just basis for depriving the offender of his liberty and reputation' (Eldridge in Bridges, Weiss & Crutchfield, 1996, p.108). Punishment should never be used:

> 'merely as a means to promote some other good for the criminal himself or for civil society, but instead it must in all cases be imposed on him only on the ground that he has committed a crime, for a human being can never be manipulated merely as a means to the purpose of someone else and can never be confused with the objects of the law of things' (Kant, 1985, p.21).

However, Angelo's zealous pursuit of the written law means he ignores the imperfect justice in which he attempts to operate and continues to provide a confused and seemingly unfair application of a punishment at odds with the crime.

The complex legal backdrop for *Measure for Measure* is clearly established in the earliest stages of the play, but it is the manner in which the characters interact with the law that highlights most specifically the side of transition to which they fall, the side of terror, or the side of confinement.

Isabella is the first to 'give argument for the more lenient and humanitarian penal system of the 18th century' (Werkman, 2015, p.18) when she appeals to Angelo to 'condemn the fault and not the actor of it' (Shakespeare, 1991, 2.2, p.79). She also criticises the punishment Angelo chooses for Claudio when stating 'who is it that died for this offence?/There's many have committed it' (Shakespeare, 1991, 2.2, p.79). Isabella highlights a desire to implement a system of confinement and considers the 'self' in punishment and prosecution. Although Isabella herself is not imprisoned or tried for a crime, she consciously decides to punish her soul through her confinement in the nunnery and 'is determined to abjure physical pleasure, public life, and procreation' (Watson in Kendall, 1998, p.144) when at the beginning of the play she asks for 'more restraint'. Throughout the play however she is repeatedly removed from her pursuit of salvation and instead required to deal with the business of body, family, and state. Watson (in Kendall, 1998, p.144) highlights this notion further when stating that:

> 'Isabella is steadily drawn into the marketplace of the physical, into mentality that thinks more about desire than religion, more about the threat of death than the hope of immortality, more about bodily confinement (a grave) than about spiritual injury (disgrace or

> damnation) that would be a restraint/ though all the world's vastidity you had'.

Although Isabella throughout the play cries out for a new system of confinement in relation to the consideration of the soul in punishment, she exists in Angelo's age of terror and he affirms 'I talk not of your soul' (Shakespeare, 1991, 2.4, p.82), instead Angelo proposes a bodily exchange to save her brother.

> ***Angelo:*** Now took your brother's life, or, to redeem him,
> Give up your body to such sweet uncleanliness, as
> She that he hath stain'd?
> ***Isabella***: Sir, believe this,
> I had rather give my body, than my soul
> ***Angelo:*** Might there not be a charity in sin
> To save this brother's life?
>
> (Shakespeare, 1991, 2.4, pp.81-82).

The Duke as the undercover overseer of Vienna also represents an age of confinement and a move towards a new penal system. Werkman (2015, p.17) explains how:

> 'the choice of the Duke very much resembles the surveillance in the panoptical in order to control the people […] it's the Duke's aim to position the characters in confessional subjection, which he does by repressive tolerance, not oppression'.

The panoptical was one of the techniques regarded by Foucault in being able to regulate people via non-violent means. Mason (2018) discusses how 'the panopticon offered a powerful and sophisticated internalized coercion, which was achieved through the constant observation of prisoners. Constant observation acted as a control mechanism; a consciousness of constant surveillance internalized' (See 5.2.2). Power is achieved via the position of observing others, often from a distance, which marks

the change in punishment to a disciplinary power where movements are supervised instead of bodies punished. This can be seen when in Act Five the Duke reveals he has been concealed as Friar Lodowick. Angelo states:

> ***Angelo***: O my dread lord,
> I should be guiltier than my guiltiness,
> To think I can be undiscernible,
> When I perceive your grace, like power divine,
> Hath look'd upon my passes. Then, good prince,
> No longer session hold upon my shame,
> But let my trial be mine own confession:
> Immediate sentence then and sequent death
> Is all the grace I beg.
>
> (Shakespeare, 1991, 5.1, p.98).

Although the Duke does not explore the possibilities of the prison as a form of correctional punishment, his notion that counselling, therapy and mitigating and aggravating circumstances should be considered is important and offers an indication of the changes surrounding how punishment is conceived. This links to Foucault's suggestion of penitentiary or correctional behaviour. For example, Pompey is excused of execution, which would be 'needless cruelty' (Shakespeare, 1991, 3.2, p.86); and is instead required to be separated from bad company and rehabilitated through therapy and 'correction and instruction' (Shakespeare, 1991, 3.2, p.86). This was recommended to not only help Pompey become a more sociable human 'but also to provide him with job skills so that he might become a more productive member of society' (Time, 1999, p.135). In this way the Duke is modernity in his consideration of self-repression and through experimenting with abandoning:

> 'public violence in return for the private discipline of its citizens. Increasingly during that period the therapeutic idea began to gain ground although its implementation differed from the contemporary therapeutic notions a healthy dose of labour discipline' was deemed to be a panacea for criminality' (Time, 1999, p.22).

Despite evidence of progressive thought regarding the penal system through some of Shakespeare's leading characters, 'the age of terror' is still present in the play. The prison remains a place where criminals wait for punishment instead of it being a method of punishment itself (Foucault, 1969, pp.118-119). Both the Duke and Angelo demonstrate unyielding power, criticised by Isabella 'Oh it is excellent/ to have a giant's strength, but it is tyrannous/ to use it like a giant' (Shakespeare, 1991, 2.2, p.80). They also both decide punishment without consultation; their power is Machiavellian and relates to a sovereign's freedom of action. Through Angelo specifically, Shakespeare depicts the techniques and methods of the old system. Angelo's power is presented as infinite and not restricted, he repents and confesses to show the fault first and the punishment to come next and he highlights how the body can be punished via penance. Angelo's monologue in Act Two, Scene Four represents an important moment in the play where Angelo is struggling with sexual desire for Isabella. Confessing his sins to God to no avail he 'becomes fixated on a punishment to his physical state and his self-lacerating language in the speech that follows, suggests that Angelo might actually flagellate himself during this speech' (McCandless, n.d., p.10).

> ***Angelo:*** When I would pray and think, I think and pray
> To several subjects. Heaven hath my empty words
> Whilst my intervention, hearing not my tongue,
> Anchors on Isabel; heaven in my mouth,
> As if I did but chew his name,
> And in my heart the strong and swelling evil
> Of my conception
>
> (Shakespeare, 1991, 2.4, p.81).

Angelo is a representation of the old system and not just in his decision to whip as a form of physical punishment, but his aim behind the strict penal system ‘is to make an example, prevent others from committing crime and thereby expand his authority, which all fits in the penal system of the Age of Terror’ (Werkman, 2015, p.23).

The elements of transition that Shakespeare’s work depicts highlights the turmoil of the penal system in place at the time *Measure for Measure* was written. Angelo is an example of old law, unyielding and unable to consider the circumstances of the prisoner due to overriding strict law and enforcement. The Duke is the new system of surveillance and mercy, exercising power over his subjects instead of sentencing them to death. The two characters allow Shakespeare to present the transition between the two penal systems. *Measure for Measure* ‘is a mirror for magistrates, then, in which Angelo, who begins his rule ‘hoping [to] find good cause to ‘whip them all’ discovers that the quality of mercy is such as to subjugate more completely than the axe or leash’ (Wilson, 1993, p.127). *Measure for Measure* documents changes in a penal system, considers a new notion of mercy, and presents the consequences of an ineffectual justice system (Werkman, 2015, p.20). It can be argued that Shakespeare ‘is profoundly concerned with the impact on the human being of abstract justice when the rigors of the law are applied by a zealot’ (Ciccolella, 2006). Shakespeare’s play argues for a balance between justice and mercy, which ‘is a topic that holds much importance in the decision of life and death for any person in the Renaissance, as most of the means of punishment in Shakespeare’s time had involved physical pain or death’ (Ciccolella, 2006).

Shakespeare was perhaps ahead of his time in his consideration of alternatives to crime and punishment (Time, 2015, p.19) and it was not until the 18th century when

punishment became focused upon changing the souls of the criminals (as presented by the Duke and Isabella). Although we can never truly say what Shakespeare's intentions were in his depiction of prison within the work, what is evident within the text is a demonstration of a type of justice that needs much greater consideration in relation to the implementation of strategies to achieve discipline.

The play suggests something about the nature of crime, how it is considered and how it should be punished. Shakespeare's presentation of the difficult nature of a penal system suggests that regardless of the manner in which crime is punished and:

> 'although we are told of engagement within the space of prison, it is important to remember that no matter how the system is developed, it remains a 'detestable solution' to much broader and complex questions about the nature of crime, the politics of power and the type of society in which we choose to exist and operate' (Foucault, 1977, p.215).

The play offers clear considerations in regards to the penal environment and whether or not its structures are beneficial for those inside the prison and/or overseeing/managing the environment. In concentrating the mind upon the historical implications of the work it is clear that the play offers a beneficial opportunity to interrogate the criminal and justice system. *Measure for Measure* provides important questions with regard to law enforcement and punishment. The historical terrain at the time in which the play was written highlights the ambiguities of the legal system in operation during the Renaissance and presents something significant about the transition from the age of terror to the age of confinement. English society in its phase of transition between two penal systems allows Shakespeare to depict and question the legal choices in operation and the demands for a new and more just system of punishment. The historical investigations into the work highlight important questions that are tantamount to the challenges of a penal environment in general terms.

The findings of this chapter will be drawn upon more specifically in chapter eight, which brings together the provocations of practice that are informed by the plays analysed alongside the method of new historicism and Brecht's historicisation and verfremdungseffekt.

5.5 Shakespeare's criminals, criminal Shakespeare: a Renaissance reading of Shakespeare and the criminal mind (through the play *Macbeth*)

Many ascertain that prisons across the globe are filled with people who think like the criminals found in Shakespeare (Bates, 2015) and there are many who believe Shakespeare's canon largely addresses crime and its accountability. If this is true, then a reading of Shakespeare's presentation of the criminal mind is important in understanding how and to a lesser extent why (as there is often no one reason why people commit crime) criminals in Shakespeare's plays violate human rights. This affords the opportunity to analyse what lessons these depictions may be able to provide to participants of applied theatre projects who are accessing criminal characters in order to transform. Against a background of Renaissance resources and an investigative interrogation of the Elizabethan and Jacobean environments that influenced Shakespeare's presentation of crime, the criminal mind will be explored.

Throughout Shakespeare's plays 'the reader is struck by the great number of crimes of different kinds that are part of the tragic structure' (O'Hood, 1972). Obvious criminal behaviour can be seen throughout his canon of work. Thieves, rogues and vagabonds are found in *Timon of Athens.* Forgery, embezzlement and false pretence can be found

in *Richard III*, and adultery is found in *Cymberline* and *The Winter's Tale.*[18] It would be beyond the remit of this thesis to consider all of the criminals found in Shakespeare's work however it is acknowledged that of the more serious crimes Goll (1938, p.492) selects six criminal types from Shakespeare's plays and explains that:

> 'In Brutus and Cassius he gives us what he terms the political criminal, Macbeth he presents as the man of ambition, while Lady Macbeth, as a type of the woman criminal, does not commit crime for her own benefit, but to elevate her husband to power, in Richard III, we have the born criminal, due in some way to his deformity; and as for Iago, he is the personification of the criminal of pure malice'.

Criminals therefore exist in a range of social, religious, governmental, business, military and familial settings and a range of Shakespearean criminals are seen to plan and commit crime for a range of reasons- always criminal in nature- but linked to ideas of political power and/or rivalry, war, revenge, murder, ambition and betrayal.

There is a long history of using Shakespeare's literature 'for pleasure and instruction' (Ko, 2014), however one of the complications of this area of practice is founded in the extent to which Shakespeare's characters are used in applied theatre to capture moral lessons and promote transformation as this:

> 'interpretive tradition has sometimes found the tension between straight moral instruction and sympathy for evil difficult to reconcile. This difficulty clearly gets ratcheted up in unpredictable ways when actual inmates who are in prison for violent crimes, including murder, perform [something similar] in prison' (Ko, 2014).

[18] Although they are false charges, the charge of infidelity takes a leading part in Shakespearean plays because of the force it carried during his time (William, 2011).

The importance here lies in questioning whether complex characters the likes of Shakespeare's criminals are helpful in promoting transformation amongst communities exploring his play texts, or whether in fact further damage can ensue when exploring or re-exploring the mind of a criminal. The implications here are not only specific to the historical implications of the play text, but also hold significance within the often therapeutic intentions of applied theatre projects (See 7.1). Therefore it is important within the consideration of this chapter to be consistently mindful of the tensions that play a role when exploring Shakespeare's criminals for the purpose of moral instruction and transformation.

Although Lady Macbeth does not physically commit a crime, and is regarded as an 'accessory before and after the act', her explicit articulation of criminal behaviour and intent are some of the most intense and detailed of any of the criminal characters within Shakespeare's canon (Orten, 2003). Her thoughts and interactions regarding criminal behaviour are referenced throughout her monologues and soliloquies and appear to point to a very specific crime that can only be fully understood in relation to its historical placement and significance. This is the crime of patrilineal castration and its links to maternal agency, patrilineal identity and infanticide which are consumed in Lady Macbeth and presented throughout her soliloquies. The purpose of this chapter is to therefore establish an understanding of how Lady Macbeth's interactions with these crimes help to present an explicit interaction with issues that are firmly embedded within Renaissance history. The reading will also demonstrate that although applied theatre projects present Shakespeare's characters as a tool to explore moral change and promote instructive transformation, the lessons are limited if they only seek the similarities to today's understanding of crime, and may be

dangerous for a participant if the issues are not explored from a safe distance away from their personal experiences.

Lady Macbeth's character throughout the play is attached to chaos, both political and social, but she does not attempt to seize masculine power instead she follows the female construct that means she does not lift a dagger but is able to consider criminal behaviour in explicit detail. At a time in history where patrilineal order was to be rigorously maintained, and masculine anxiety regarding the power of the female in relation to maternal authority existed, the character of Lady Macbeth speaks clearly to her Renaissance audience in regards to their cultural fears. Chamberlain states that 'although many academics have read Lady Macbeth's invocations relating to maternity and motherhood as a desire to seize masculine power; her power is in fact conditioned on maternity, an ambiguous, conflicted status in early modern England' (2005, p.73) and 'perhaps no other Shakespearean character better represents the threat of maternal agency than she does' (Chamberlain, 2005, p.79).

In Act One, Scene Five upon receiving Macbeth's letters before his return from war, Lady Macbeth is so encouraged by the letter's contents that she summons spirits:

> 'That tend on mortal thoughts, unsex me here,
> And fill me from the crown to the toe top-full
> Of direst cruelty. Make thick my blood.
> Stop up the access and passage to remorse,
> That no compunctious visitings of nature
> Shake my fell purpose, nor keep peace between
> The effect and it! Come to my woman's breasts,
> And take my milk for gall, you murd'ring ministers,
> Wherever in your sightless substances
> You wait on nature's mischief. Come, thick night,
> And pall thee in the dunnest smoke of hell,
> That my keen knife see not the wound it makes,
> Nor heaven peep through the blanket of the dark
> To cry "Hold, hold!"
>
> (Shakespeare, 1991, 1.5, pp.849-850).

In very quick succession throughout the speech Lady Macbeth subverts the early modern period's expectation of motherhood. Within this speech alone she asks for her milk to be 'turned to gall', 'to be 'unsexed', and for her body to be filled 'from the crown to the toe top-full of direst cruelty' (Shakespeare, 1991, 1.5, pp.849-850). Two significant things are referenced within her speech. Firstly, Shakespeare mentions breastfeeding, which was regarded by the early modern period as a fundamental and biological trait of woman, and then Lady Macbeth turns it into something evil. Secondly, Lady Macbeth asks to be unsexed so that her body is unable to reproduce, again a subversion of female expectation but simultaneously a suggestion that would put a stop to Macbeth's lineage. Garber (1997, p.154) explains that 'heirs are important to political as well as social outcomes is too apparent throughout this play […] the play is as urgently concerned with dynasty, offspring and succession as any in Shakespeare'. Shakespeare therefore plays on the cultural fears of his audience that are different to those held today.

Lady Macbeth's second speech goes even further in referencing her criminal thoughts. She states:

> [...] I have given suck, and know
> How tender 'tis to love the babe that milks me.
> I would, while it was smiling in my face,
> have plucked my nipple from his boneless gums
> and dashed the brains out, had I so sworn as you
> have done to this.
>
> (Shakespeare, 1991, 1.7, p851)

Although this is a speech predominantly interpreted as a method to persuade her husband to murder King Duncan, the references in her speech to motherhood and

infanticide cannot be underestimated or ignored. They again link to specifically-placed cultural fears and Sokol and Sokol (2000, p.233) explain that historically:

> 'No other early modern crime better exemplifies cultural fears about maternal agency than infanticide, a crime against both person and lineage. Treated as a sin in medieval England, one punishable through ecclesiastical penance, infanticide, by the early modern period, had been deemed a criminal offence, one punishable by hanging'.

Lady Macbeth is seen in the image of a lactating mother who goes on to brutally kill her baby. This use of juxtaposition is important in showing the:

> 'loving image of nurturing mother […] which immediately gives way to one of absolute horror, as a demonic mother butchers her yet-smiling infant […] that this savagery surfaces at a moment of greatest intimacy between mother and child only adds to its incomprehensible brutality (Chamberlain, 2005, p.82)

It matters little whether Lady Macbeth actually ever nursed children, it is more prevalent that 'Lady Macbeth uses and appeals to the maternal [by] calling up the chilling image of infanticide' (Chamberlain, 2005, p.81). This may be referencing the cases of infanticide that led to the '1624 Infanticide Act which made it a criminal offense to secretly bury or conceal the death of their [lewd women's] children' (Fletcher, 1995, p.277). Between 1558 and 1688 there were 230 recorded cases of infanticide (Spence, 2010). The play *Macbeth* was written in 1606 by which point the rate of infanticide was 3 per 100,000 (Sokol and Sokol, 2000, p.236). What is interesting about this figure is that 'the passage of the 1624 statute that targeted infanticide represents unusually severe punishment, and the exceptionally high execution rate for convicted infanticides that punctuated the seventeenth century' (Copeland, 2008, p.16) appears at odds with the low number of crimes being committed. This is significant as it highlights not necessarily how common infanticide was as a criminal

act, but rather how significant the fear of the population was in attempting to control maternal agency, whilst simultaneously fearing it. Maternal agency is explored throughout the speech and suggests that Shakespeare is attempting to 'reveal much […] about the early modern anxiety surrounding mother's roles in the perpetuation of patrilineage' (Copeland, 2008, p.16). Botelho (2008, p.114) suggests that 'murder and the forgetting of maternal duty serve as a way for any women to resist or subvert subordination or confinement'. Her empowerment is instead based on the dependent:

> 'Loving relationship with the one she will shortly slaughter: a lamb sacrifice. That a mother could lovingly nurture her infant one moment and spill his brains the next underscores the uncertainties; if not the danger of unchecked maternal agency' (Chamberlain, 2005, p.82).

Other literature of the period is not the only source demonstrating the subject of power through mothering; historical sources also depict 'the fear of, fascination with, and hostility toward maternal power in early modern England' (Dolan, 1994, p.283). One aspect of this power links to the assurances of matrilineal identity, of which the father lacks similar assurances. The most important aspect of this power however is the ability for a woman to undermine and/or control the patrilineal process. Chamberlain (2005, p.77) states:

> 'the infanticidal mothers represented in the assize records are all Lady Macbeths, who would lightly dash out the brains of the babes entrusted to their care […] In doing so, these accounts communicate existing early modern anxieties about the inherent dangers of maternal agency both to helpless children as well as to the patrilineal system dependent upon women for its perpetuation'.

Therefore, Lady Macbeth 'embodies both her society's expectations and its anxieties about motherhood by showing motherhood to be at once empowering and destructive' (Staub, 2000, p.345). Shakespeare therefore uses Lady Macbeth's speech to evoke

fear in the audience which is relative to early modern England's desire to protect patrilineal rights. Ultimately by dashing the babe's brains, 'Lady Macbeth is happy to kill Macbeth's progeny to secure his succession; but in killing the progeny she must likewise destroy his patrilineage, rendering his short-lived reign a baron one' (Chamberlain, 2005, p.82).

The role of Lady Macbeth as evil is clear, but the clarity is only absolute when it is regarded in the historical vernacular in which the play was created. As Adelman (1987, p.105) observes 'the play becomes […] a representation of primitive fears about male identity and autonomy itself, about those looming female presences who threaten to control one's mind, to constitute one's very self, even at a distance'. By using infanticide Shakespeare highlights how Lady Macbeth may be able to 'undermine patrilineal outcomes'. Therefore, although Lady Macbeth never wields the dagger, it is her infanticidal fantasy that culminates in Macbeth brooding upon the disappearance of his name (Burnett, 2002). Chamberlain (2005, p.83) forces forward the point that:

> 'It is this loss of name, of a protected patrilineal identity that proves so destructive to this man who would be the father of kings. For what Lady Macbeth's frightening maternal agency renders is not a coveted line, but rather a barren reign, one which quickly disintegrates when confronted by legitimate political authority'.

Lady Macbeth's crimes are not water tight, although appearing indifferent to her insinuations of infanticide:

> 'what she fails to notice is what will become of her husband given the failure to produce a living heir […] at no point does she express a concern for Macbeth's extinguished patrilineage […] and merely cautions 'what's done is done'' (Chamberlain, 2005, p.84).

It is this indifference which is bred from the negative impact maternal agency provided early modern England, which aroused cultural fears regarding the patrilineal process and thus makes Lady Macbeth one of the most feared criminals in Renaissance England.

Taking into consideration the ideas of maternal agency, patrilineal identity and lineage, and infanticide the extent of Lady Macbeth's crimes can be understood. It is clear that a historical reading of the work is needed when exploring this character's thoughts on crime, as the true extent of her evil is only comprehended when an understanding of cultural fears and traditions are explored. It has been important therefore to undertake an historical and critical reading of Lady Macbeth generally and her references to crime specifically. This may be the case for a range of characters accessed as part of applied theatre. Therefore, one must use the lessons of this play cautiously and tread carefully when suggesting that Shakespeare's plays can provide transformative encounters when engaging with the lessons of the work, as such lessons are complex and can remain tied to beliefs pervasive during the Renaissance which are different from our own.

The findings of this chapter will be drawn upon more specifically in chapter eight, which brings together the provocations of practice that will be informed by all of the plays analysed alongside the method of new historicism and Brecht's historicisation and verfremdungseffekt.

5.6 Education Shakespeare Company: a case study

This chapter aims to look specifically at the Education Shakespeare Company's (ESC) use of Shakespeare's work within their own penal programme and how this programme captures some of the methodologies, intentions, impacts and challenges

aforementioned. The ESC is an arts education charity and their core work focuses on involving marginalised people in the arts (ESC) and empowering them 'to find their voice and tell stories through film' (Landy, 2012, p.155). ESC started in order to 'work with people experiencing extreme marginalisation within society' (ESC) and is now an established company with a very developed filmography. In every ESC project, the focus is on the 'creative process and on creating a high quality end product, while emphasizing the therapeutic and rehabilitative effects of the work that they do' (ESC).

ESC specialises 'in mental health and criminal justice and work with community and forensic mental health patients, youth at risk, and people who have suffered trauma, amongst many others. They use drama and film to challenge perceptions, tackle social exclusion and change lives' (ESC). They have also worked with 'prison officers' widows, medically retired prison officers, young homeless people and young people suffering from cancer' (nicva). Given the purpose and nature of this chapter, their work with prisoners will remain the focus throughout.

ESC was founded in 1999 by Michael Bogdanov (former director of the English Shakespeare Company), who invited his assistant director, Tom Magill, to deliver Shakespeare workshops to schools in Belfast, Northern Ireland. In 2003 the company moved into filmmaking, and was supported by Peace II funding.[19] In 2007 ESC

[19] Since 1995 there have been three PEACE programmes, which are all part of an initiative created by the Northern Ireland Peace programme, financially supported by the EU through both EU regional policy and EU contributions to the International Fund for Ireland (IFI), with a financial contribution of EUR 1.3 billion. PEACE II (2000-2006) received funding from all the Structural Funds. The PEACE programme has been implemented as a cross-border cooperation programme and has two main aims: 1) the cohesion between communities involved in the conflict in Northern Ireland and the border counties of Ireland and 2) economic and social stability (European Parliament) (Europarl, 2017)

produced the award-winning film *Mickey B*, a modern adaptation of Shakespeare's *Macbeth* with prisoners from Maghaberry maximum-security prison, Belfast. By 2008, producer Jennifer Marquis-Muradaz founded ESC's first international branch ESC US in Naples, Florida (ESC), and in 2014 the company spearheaded Northern Ireland's first mental health arts and film festival (ESC).

It is important to reiterate that the ESC is concerned with making filmic and not theatre-based adaptations of Shakespeare's plays, which emerged from drama workshops with the prisoners. Still following the intentions of applied theatre, captured predominantly by the influences of the work of Boal, the films are a purposefully selected medium by the ESC. The justification for their use appears twofold: firstly it is relevant to the participant and secondly it offers an opportunity to capture important educational skills and developments for the participant. For Magill & Marquis-Muradaz (in Jennings, 2009, p.112) the justification for using film is clear:

> 'Whilst prisoners generally know little about theatre and Shakespeare, they can and do spend up to twenty-three hours inside a cell with television. So they know a lot about films […] Making a film which involved several short bursts of work over several days and included long breaks […] helped to balance out the prisoner's less-developed concentration and listening skills, as well as memorisation/literacy problems […] Filming allowed us to accommodate unavoidable interruptions and delays (legal and family visits, court dates, alarms, prison jobs, other classes, etc.) and provided important opportunities for those who did not want to appear on screen […] we have also learnt that film is an extraordinary self-evaluation tool. People will watch their onscreen behaviour […] and learn from this 'objective' third party vantage point in a way that cannot be replicated in any other medium'.

The benefits of the medium are therefore far-reaching as an immediate tool to experience, capture and then assess change. Its use is justified in being an effective

tool for ‘enabling people to modify their own behaviour at their own pace and on their own terms’ (Magill & Marquis-Muradaz in Jennings, 2009, p.112).

The aims and intentions of ESC go a long way in highlighting their desire for social change. The company are clear about their links to applied theatre. Their manifesto on how to capture change documents their work as being influenced by the purposes of applied theatre and they equate their work to the aims of Boalian praxis and healing. Magill explains that the work undertakes a process of discovery and follows the method of ‘teaching by asking instead of telling’ (Boal, 1998, p.128 in Jennings, 2009, p.112). Magill (in Jennings, 2009, 113) further explains that this method is:

> ‘More effective with prisoners especially those labelled ‘high risk and those that have an attitude problem with authority. We encourage prisoners to become independent and to choose their own level of responsibility through the role they play in the film’.

Magill served time in prison where he experienced a profound change leading to a career as an applied theatre artist devoted to serving others in similar circumstances. He was also a student of Boal and became a representative of his techniques and methods in Northern Ireland. This is testimony to the influence of applied theatre upon ESC. They encourage storytelling which ‘creates solidarity and support’ (Boal in ESC). They aim to ‘create a safe space where people feel free to take risks; the key to empowerment and emancipation’ (Freire in ESC) they further ‘believe people have the solutions to their own problems and often use Forum Theatre to help them find them’ (ESC).[20] ESC aim to create work that helps to ‘integrate people back into society more easily […] and use Tom Magill’s experiences to help further develop methods of rehabilitating the marginalised through the arts’ (Landy, 2012, p.156). The company

[20] Forum Theatre was originally created by Augusto Boal, Forum Theatre affords the audience to participate with and change the action unfolding in front of them in order to make a social change.

also fit the desire to be participatory as the prisoners are required to be actively involved with the filmic productions and prisoners are asked to engage with projects in the role of performance and/or production. The films are shot in prison workshops, firstly to avoid disruptions of the everyday workings of the environment, but an added benefit to this is the opportunity for prisoners to learn a trade, skills like Braille, painting, woodwork and bricklaying. It provides prisoners with an opportunity to develop multimedia skills acquired in the filmmaking trade, and develop literacy problems with accredited qualifications, such as Active Citizen Awards. 15 of the prisoners achieved an Educational Certificate, an Active Citizenship Award (ASDAN) for taking part in the film project. Overall, ESC desire to 'use drama and film to challenge perceptions, change lives, tackle social exclusion and encourage civic engagement in order to radically transform people' (ESC).

Since the film projects began in 2006, ESC has developed a vast filmography. Their prison work includes documentaries such as: *Two Sides of the Coin* (2004/5 with The Prison Service Trust, which filmed the stories of medically retired prison officers and widows serving during the Troubles) *The Big Question* (2005/6 made by Magill and Simon Wood in association with Prison Arts Foundation) and *Seen but not Heard* (2008 with Queen's University Social Work Department and the criminal justice system). Short films include *Inside job* (2003/4 in association with Prison Arts Foundation) *Extern: The First Course* (207 with Extern AXIS and ex-prisoners and people on probation. This project was funded by Peace II from Proteus in partnership with Prison Arts Foundation) and *Extern: The Second Course* (2008 with a group of volunteer ex-prisoners and people on probation). Of all of the work produced by ESC, their feature films are the most important to this thesis as they use Shakespeare's work as the main stimulus. These projects include ESC's award winning *Mickey B*

(2007 with HMP Maghaberry, an adaptation of Shakespeare's *Macbeth*) and currently in development is *Prospero's prison* a modern adaptation of Shakespeare's *The Tempest* set in a Belfast Prison.

Prospero's Prison will see 'Prospero, a successful criminal set up, framed and imprisoned by his scheming ambitious brother Antonio and his crew. The Island becomes a prison in post-conflict Northern Ireland' (ESC). The company plan to use a cross-community group of ex-prisoners as cast and locate the film in Belfast Prison (Crumlin Road Gaol) (ESC). Magill states:

> 'Prospero's Prison is timely in the context of Northern Ireland's peace process. For so long in the history of Northern Ireland, revenge has been the reply to violence, perpetuating the cycle of destruction. For this reason, The Tempest is a story worth re-telling for the lessons it can teach us about the wisdom of experience leading to forgiveness and reconciliation' (ESC).

The overarching aims of the company and justification for the work's existence are that the:

> 'ESC wants to enable people to understand and transform their lives, using drama and film to explore and record their stories. Through a core set of values of respect, trust, choice, responsibility, courage, understanding, non-judgementalism and inclusivity, the organisation uses the medium of film and practice of filmmaking to help groups and individuals to understand the potential and power of film for documenting life stories, the practical and technical side of filmmaking, and their own potential for change and personal growth' (nicva).

ESC's 2007 film *Mickey B* 'was shot in Northern Ireland's maximum-security prison, HMP Maghaberry and features 42 characters played by prisoners and prison staff' (ICAN, n.d.). Roles included writers and performers, while crew work, also undertaken by the inmates, included the erection of sets, painting, editing, production assistance, sound and make-up. ESC and Magill had an overseeing role over the production. The

39-page screenplay was written and adapted by Magill, and then rewritten into prison slang by Sam McClean and Jason Thompson (two of the prison's actors). Alongside the change to prison vernacular, 'Birnam Wood became Birnam Jail, Macbeth is Mickey B and Lady Macbeth is Ladyboy, Mickey B's bitch, the witches are bookies and Macduff is Duffer' (Landy, 2012, p.155). There is the addition of a narrator in the film, the characters are reimagined and the location of the play is shifted from a castle in Scotland to a prison in Belfast. The actor playing the role of Ladyboy/Lady Macbeth argues that it's 'appropriate to set [the film] in a jail [because] Macbeth's greatest motivating factor is his ambition … There's plenty of boys in here that are the same' (Wray, 2011). Other changes can be found in the ending of the work where there is a:

> 'Mutually beneficial arrangement between Malcolm and the prison authorities. Malcolm, it is suggested, has the "buckets" (staff) fighting on his side; the tyrant is ousted and, in return, the Governor regains control of the wings […] The closing montage shows us each character now isolated, in solitary confinement and under guard (one outside each cell, heavily armed). A new coda reveals Malcolm, wearing his father's chain, playing chess with the Governor, who is back in charge' (Wray, 2011).

Research suggests that companies such as ESC, by embracing a project such as *Mickey B*, raise important questions about current inequities of space and place, issues of cultural translation, notions of the Shakespearean universal and the place of the regional in discussions of practice (Burnett, 2012, p.15). Projects like *Mickey B* permit a renewed attention to local-global relations (Burnett, 2012) and draw attention to the scope and scale of the works suggested impact. Although this provides a broad-based reaction to the impacts of the work, it simultaneously highlights the importance of Shakespeare's work as a vehicle for cultural value and promotion of public dialogue

(Burnett, 2012). The work can be seen to provide impact and the ESC articulate advantage in using Shakespeare's work alongside Boalian intentions.

The work is award-wining receiving the Roger Graff Award for Outstanding Achievement in Film, where it was acknowledged as 'an outstanding piece of work … with mesmerising performances and [a] narrative [which] … deserves to be seen, and on its own merits' (ESC). The work has received further critical acclaim and praise from Kenneth Brannagh, Stephen Rea, Ken Loach, and Linda Smith, among others who said *Mickey B* 'is a strong and imaginatively conceived film, the actors are remarkable and Northern Ireland's voices are very powerful' (ESC). M*ickey B* also 'garnered international critical acclaim from the likes of Boal who said, "You have helped prisoners be better citizens, transforming themselves and society around them"' (ESC). The work has been screened at multiple international film festivals and continues to receive praise for its ability to engage people within community-facing projects that seek to address pressing social issues and concerns. The project has also been commended for its work with socially-excluded groups and at the heart of ESC is the desire to promote the marginalisation of the prisoners using applied theatre praxis to develop and transform its participants. In this regard the benefits of the work are clear: to promote the oppressed.

Although a lot of people questioned the integrity of the work and perhaps even questioned 'could [Shakespeare's] works reach even *this* audience?' (Berry, 2003) the feedback from the participants themselves provides an idea of the impact of the work. It is documented that generally prisoners 'found in the production of *Mickey B* a way of exploring feelings around the violence that they had committed in the past' (ESC). In the ESC's supporting documentary the section titled *creating radical transformation:*

three men tell their stories, offers an even clearer interaction with the benefits of the project. Tim McCullough discusses how *Macbeth* offered a proximity to his real-life. He also documents the demands the film project placed on him in relation to process, expectations and opportunities. He explains:

> 'I got involved with ESC to make a short film. I didn't think I would make a film that would be so close to who I really was. Was I committed to the film? Was I committed to the process? I struggle with that one. The process itself was a rediscovery of my creativity… it was expressing myself in a way that was directly related to my addiction. When you get in-front of the camera and then have the opportunity to look back at it, you can't deny it; you can't say that's not me. Part of the whole process was truth and honesty. This was an opportunity for me to really sit down and look at what I was doing. I think radical is a good word to use for the transformation that has happened in my life for the change that's happened. The opportunity to look at myself and tell my story, then stand back and look at it, gave me perspective' (CultureNI).

Sam McLean, writer for *Mickey B,* acknowledges the benefits of the work for the prisoner he explains:

> 'My life was definitely out of control, no doubt about it. And I remember sitting in prison and that night, after I had been sentenced to 20 years in prison, and it wasn't a nice feeling. I wanted a change in my life, but I didn't know how to do it. When we set up the drama classes this was the first thing most of us have ever done, legitimate, honest thing, we achieved something and I thought hold on there's another way here, and ESC showed me that, there's no doubt. I would not steal a bar of chocolate now, and I really didn't think I could have said that, I really didn't. ESC got me a job when I came out' (Culture NI).

MacLean also provides a more final and direct response to his experience, which appears appealing to all involved in the project when he states: 'I spent 26 years in prison, it cost £2.5 million pounds to keep me there, and the only time I got rehabilitated was doing *Mickey B*' (ESC). Maclean presents an acute awareness of the politics the work is bound to.

Tom King describes the ESC's drama as 'one of the best things' he has been involved in (ESC). He talks about the need for such projects to help prisoners transform, when stating:

> 'Through the filmmaking aspect of it I relived my past in an upfront and honest way. In an environment with people, who I didn't realise, were experiencing very similar problems. After making the film I said to Tom, what am I to do now? I have no-one else to blame. I want to go on and achieve higher things. If ESC had got me in my early teens and helped me to see the potential that I have my life would have been radically changed' (CultureNI).

Instead of 'lock them up and throw away the key' (ESC), ESC wanted to use Shakespeare's work for what they have identified as the life-changing impact it can have on its prisoners. Robin Mansfield, Director of the Northern Ireland Prison Service states:

> 'It is a valuable part of the resettlement process and working on this film helped those involved to gain new skills, to learn to work as a team and look at the world in an entirely new way. It is important to balance the sensitivities surrounding such a project, including potential victim's issues, with the efforts of being made to ensure that inmates leave prison as balanced individuals equipped to make a positive contribution to society' (ESC).

Due to the one key supporter of the project, 'a positive progressive who understood the prison culture and exactly what we were up against' (Magill & Marquis-Muradaz in Jennings, 2009, pp.109), the film was able to act as an education or work programme.

Despite positive reactions to the work, ESC is also commended for creating work that faced a range of challenges. Magill and Marquis-Muradaz (in Jennings, 2009, pp.109-111) document:

> ‘Prison staff resistance. Maximum-security prisons are risk adverse. Fear and distrust are the dominant motivations that underlie almost every decision. Daily airtight procedures produce a monotony that numbs the senses in the name of safety […] prison staff reacted to the film and our presence with suspicion and inflexibility, appearing either blatantly apathetic or downright hostile […] we learned a great deal that scared us about the people who care them, the people we put in charge of our most vulnerable, our most violent, our most damaged’.

From conception to fruition, ESC was fighting against some of the fundamental difficulties faced when attempting to combine theatre with a penal environment.

In considering the use of Shakespeare’s work specifically alongside this project, on their website ESC state: ‘We believe that we can learn from the wisdom of Shakespeare by updating and translating him for audiences today’ (Michael Bogdanov on ESC). In an interview with Werner (in Pensalfinini, 2016, p.138) Magill justifies that:

> ‘Shakespeare is too important to be used solely as a cultural sermon for the middle classes and the dwindling ancient congregations at Stratford […] anybody can do Shakespeare given the right access and opportunity to participate with the text […] Shakespeare’s text is too important. We can learn much from these stories by engaging with them in multiple manners- and through multiple media. These stories shouldn’t be sealed off, people need to see them, people need to hear them, people need to participate in them at every level of society’.

Parts of Magill’s considerations are forward-thinking and suggest the importance of using adaptation to discover differences between the past and now, translating Shakespeare’s work in the areas that may not speak to an audience today. However he also reiterates some of the concerns raised in the earlier sections of the thesis which indicate that cultural values bound up with Shakespeare’s work can often override the consideration of the political and cultural values embedded in Shakespeare’s own theatre.

By selecting the play *Macbeth,* Magill states that the play is important because 'the moral of *Macbeth* is that crime doesn't pay. The means do no justify the ends. Ill-gotten gains have only a brief period of enjoyment' (in Jennings, 2009, p.114). Classic texts such as *Macbeth* offered Magill the ability to:

> 'Create the necessary distance for prisoners to understand implications of their crimes safely. It can create empathy, particularly in relation to victims even fictional victims. We experienced that prisoners can come to understand the relationship between cause and effect that can, in turn, lead to transformation' (Magill & Marquis-Muradaz in Jennings, 2009, p.114).

Although Magill does not allude to what it is about Shakespeare's plays *specifically* that incite possibilities for transformation, he draws attention to some of the important provocations that are central to this study in promoting the importance of distancing the participant from the issues explored within Shakespeare's text.

The participants of *Mickey B* also offer an insight into use of the play from the perspective of those accessing and potentially benefitting from the text. Many thought that the text was a good choice as 'you'd think [the story] was already being played out in this place' (ESC). Prisoners state that 'Shakespeare writes about people. He writes about human emotion. He writes about things that really happen' (ESC). Another 'translates *Macbeth*'s reality of tenth-century Scottish Thanes and clan loyalties and betrayals to existing conditions in Northern Ireland when stating "You get that [violence] on the Lower Shankill. You get that kind of problem in the New Lodge Road where I'm from … cliques and gangs"' (ESC). The advantages of using the play appear bound to its ability to identify with the experiences of the prisoners that are housed there.

Complications can be found in some of the dialogue that surrounds Magill's justification for the work. At times, Magill appears to sentimentalise that Shakespeare 'is reliable and trustworthy and infinitely pliable' (in Pensalfini, 2016, p.139) and is therefore a good source because it allows for adaptations to be produced. In an accompanying educational pack, ESC state: 'we chose a play about violence and the repercussions of violence by an author we believed would excite and impress prison staff and funders' (ESC). Wray (2011) states that Magill's use of Shakespeare:

> 'It is a double-edged construction in which the Bard is regarded as a defining ingredient of the educational establishment, to the extent that any adaptation of his work carries with it acute questions not about cultural translatability but economic advantage'.

Wray warns that 'these gestures signal both the institutional praxes within which such organizations as the ESC work (external finance and support are constant drivers) and the global marketplace in which certain appropriations of Shakespeare carry cultural capital' (Wray, 2011). Wray's criticisms are important as they highlight the widest and most encompassing difficulties inherent in work that may have been influenced by readily available financial support and/or gain (See 1.2, and 5.2.4).

It is interesting to note that ESC has developed a series of partnerships with funders and stakeholders (LloydsTSB) to meet its mission and vision, and Magill himself reflects that 'it's useful to remember that during the making of *Mickey B*, we had disparate stakeholder groups to satisfy and a range of complex sensitivities to negotiate' (in Pensalfinini, 2015, p.177). ESC state that 'an independent external evaluation found that for every £1 invested in our work with prisoners and ex-prisoners, we produced a Social Return on Investment (SROI) of £10.49' (ESC).[21]

[21] ESC Ltd secured £135,700 during 2010/11 period from multiple funders of which £90,000 came

This critical interpretation of using Shakespeare's work for economic advantage importantly implies that Shakespeare's work is a vital commodity to which funding may be readily given and, whilst there is no doubt that funding is important for the continuation of projects of this nature, there is criticism to be offered in the justification behind selecting Shakespeare's work simply and solely due to agenda-driven incentives and his continuous links to cultural authority. This reiterates the idea that there remains a difficulty in using a source that may be firmly ingrained in a perception of financial gain; cultural heritage and advancement (see 1.2).

With reference to the place and space in which the work is captured, the film moves between a Shakespearean setting and a penal environment, therefore some elements of the play were removed, and some elements remained. The decisions appear to be made, not from a deep rooted understanding of the play text, but rather a deeper routed understanding of prison and the history of Northern Ireland. Cultural differences became a key context for *Mickey B*, and Shakespeare was used to cross cultural boundaries (e.g. between English and Irish, High and Low Class, straight culture and gang culture, freedom and incarceration). Wray (2011) emphasises how:

> 'the project is thus a multiple form of intermediation that arises out of the differences rather than similarities which all contributes into the ways in which adaptation is intermediated into something other than the putative source text'.

Therefore, and although it is initially clear that the work in its application alongside prisoners has needed to consider clear, adaptive elements in order to be relevant and important to the prisoners, the company could also be at risk of appropriating

from Trusthouse/Hollywell for a three-year period. Thus, emphasising the role that the Foundation plays in leveraging additional monies for organisations in general and for Education Shakespeare Company in particular. (LloydsTSB).

Shakespeare in order to serve the purpose of fulfilling an incentive which engages with national, class and penal constructions.

The conversion of the language into prison dialect is the most significant change to the work. Interestingly not all of the language was changed into Irish vernacular; some of the original language was kept at the request of the prisoners. Magill explains how converting the language of Shakespeare means it is taken from the oppressor and given to the oppressed. Prisoner William explains that 'most of us are illiterate so we've had to adapt the plot and put our own language in. The play's a bit violent and we've kept the cursing to a minimum. But, y'know, it's Shakespeare' (ESC). ESC state that using prison slang instead of Shakespearean language is a purposeful choice which makes the work more accessible to a prison audience; the overarching intention being to naturalise and understand Shakespeare's language (ESC).

The choice of changing the language is commendable given the target audience, and there is relevance to an argument that places the needs of the community first, in line with Boalian praxis. Changing the language into prison vernacular and relocating the place and space of the original play is also not totally illogical and the film still 'parallels many elements of plot, character and themes drawn from *Macbeth*, whilst also featuring some significant departures from or additions to Shakespeare's play' (Pensalfini, 2015, p.162). However problems could be deduced from the implication that Shakespeare's work is 'made to fit' the intentions of ESC's work and the penal environment. Wray (2011) supports this notion when highlighting that:

> 'the outcome is a kind of universalizing discourse about Shakespeare that would not be acceptable in alternative critical situations […] the work instead presents an unwillingness to challenge the precise meanings that Shakespeare has for prisoners which results in context

> falling out of the equation and issues of cultural specificity being overlooked'.

The problem is bound to the notion that Shakespeare's *name* is a cultural commodity guaranteed to achieve acceptance and afford continuation in this theatrical environment. The work becomes linked to a cultural value too important to ignore and despite a widespread reiteration of Shakespeare's universalising force, Shakespeare's work is in danger of being seen as a source selected simply because 'the prison authorities had no objections to the text or that it was Shakespeare' (in Pensalfini, 2016, p.38). The project may also not be seen as an endeavour of adaptation, but rather 'getting the prison context to fit the story of *Macbeth* in order to be true to the local prison culture' (Wray, 2011) therefore 'Shakespeare's wisdom' could be left behind to embrace the prison context more directly in the work (Wray, 2011).

The decision to include Lady Macbeth's suicide and not remove it from the adaptation offers another link to prison culture, a representation perhaps of the 29 deaths in Northern Irish prisons since 2005. The inclusion of suicide helps to remind the audience of the 'gaps in the self-harm and suicide policy' which Pauline McCabe documents in the prison ombudsmen of 2010-2011 (McCabe, 2012). Although the inclusion of the suicide references directly and specifically the prison culture being explored, it also provides 'a chilling reminder of the power of art to replay and disrupt key tropes associated with issues of crime and punishment' (Wray, 2011). It further reflects the fact that:

> 'Maghaberry has a notorious record in respect of suicide among the incarcerated. [A] damning report on deaths in gaol in 2009 noted "systemic problems" in relation to the treatment of vulnerable prisoners. At this moment, *Mickey B* is insistently dialogic, working in

> concert with its frames of reference to highlight precisely those concerns the institution has endeavoured to repress' (Pensalfini, 2015, p.156).

The decision to include the suicide may be regarded as both stereotypical and contradictory. Although 'the pernicious effects of colonization and violent conflict result in struggles including a desire to escape stereotypes and a promotion of reductive readings of many complex situations' (Wray, 2011) here the prisoners are asked to face the issue and present the stereotype to benefit the project. Although ESC's intentions may be to:

> 'mirror realities and illuminate wider instances of communities facing challenges- these difficult prison realities may only be included because this helps to heighten the dialectic of the film between source and adaptation, and between text and context' (REF, 2014).

ESC's decisions are presented as justified because 'of its centrality to the original- Shakespeare's revered text' (REF, 2014), however changes to character's genders (Lady Macbeth to Lady Boy) or the revisionist ending to the film do not appear to be a problem for the ESC who suggest that 'Shakespeare requires updating and translating to be meaningful and relevant to an audience today' (REF, 2014). The ESC use the aspects of the work that benefit the vision of their projects but find a justification for the removal of other/similar elements. The considerations appear to be presented in line with how the changes made shape a story relevant to its prison vernacular and context and says something significantly more aligned to the incentives of the prison.

Although Magill does indicate that a safe distance from the issues of the text through its historical and fictional implications can be achieved, it remains

questionable that the work is asking its participants to revisit painful memories and replay them for the purpose of an applied theatre project. By closely aligning their adaptation to Northern Irish history and prison contexts, this simultaneously means that the prisoners are required to replay and confront their past-experiences, regardless of the damage this may cause. Ko states that:

> *'Macbeth* has a long history as the kind of morality fable that has served the age-old Horatian objectives for literature of pleasure and instruction. However, the play also has a stage history of inviting terrifying but highly sympathetic portraits of Macbeth, especially as actors (and the culture at large) became more and more interested in studying inner psychology. The interpretive tradition has sometimes found the tension between straight moral instruction and sympathy for evil difficult to reconcile (2014).

The difficulty for any prisoner/participant, and this is by no means exclusive to the ESC, is that they are consumed in unpredictable ways by the content of the work. They are asked to build characters through the play's violent action, and in some manner re-live a similar violence that they have been incarcerated for.

As a side example, inserted here to more firmly demonstrate this point is the Shakespeare Behind Bars project (SBB; see 4.3.1) who aim to 'relate the universal themes of Shakespeare to the lives of other human beings and to society at-large' (Ko, 2014). Through the moral purpose of the action and the feelings cultivated by the play (Ko, 2014) the project aimed to use *Othello* to illuminate the complex processes behind criminal activity. Ko states it was the moments of the text when Shakespeare's 'purposiveness without [moral] purpose seems most visible' (2014) that the prisoners were asked to explore.

Sammie Bryon in 1999 was asked to play the role of Othello. He reflects that 'the death scene… was similar to the crime I committed' (Herold, 2014, p.89). His best friend

states that ‘the play mirrors his crime to the point where it was just, like, identical, and I get goose bumps right now just talking about it.’ (Scott-Douglass, 2007, p.35). Sammie was incarcerated in 1983 for raping and strangling his mistress to death. He was sentenced to 25 years in prison. Then, 15 years later, he theatrically recreates an eerily similar scene when suffocating a fellow inmate playing the role of Desdemona. The project asks Sammie to ‘face his monster’ (Scott-Douglass, 2007, p.35) and discusses the ‘cathartic experience’ the project affords when asking Sammie (as Othello) to suffocate Desdemona to death. They explain how they are not worried about Sammie ‘yes he had committed a crime of passion. Yes, he has been given a life sentence. But since then he had served 20 years. More importantly, he truly changed’ (Scott-Douglass, 2007, p.38). The example of Sammie is complex. It adheres to the assumptive suggestions of Shakespeare’s benefits to the incarcerated particularly in reference to how Shakespeare’s combination with therapy can induce levels of healing (see 4.3.2). It seems to take no responsibility for the participant interacting with the work and instead the project appears to place Shakespeare in the role of a psychotherapist. This reiterates the risks of combining disparate forms of theatre for the purposes of transformation. It also assumes that because the prisoners have committed crimes they will automatically identify with Shakespeare’s fictitious criminals, which might be simultaneously untrue and/or dangerous. Any level of identification with complex characters is compromising. Companies using Shakespeare’s characters for moral instruction therefore need to be careful as to how interactions with the work might unfold. That is not to say that the ESC are using character identification in a similar fashion to the SBB, but the implications of reliving any experience of this nature are inherent within this type of work and must be acknowledged. It could also be argued that *Mickey B* seems to set out to use the play

to say something significant about prison ‘particularly for those unfamiliar with the prison environment’ (in Pensalfini, 2016, p.38) but instead reinstates the structures of the authority that exists in the environment in which the prisoners are incarcerated (see 5.2).

ESC’s *Mickey B* faced a range of criticism. In reaction to the choice of play Magill and Marquis-Muradaz (in Jennings, 2009, p.110) explain that:

> ‘Some staff thought we had too many Catholics not enough Protestants in the case. Others hated the script-citing the swearing, the drug references and the murders as problematic. In particular, Lady Macbeth’s suicide was a problem because of the recent suicides in prison. The fact that it was set in a prison at all gave rise to the fear that some people would view the film as a slice of Maghaberry prison itself. The plot, the prisoners controlling the jail was too close for comfort given the recent memory of the Maze Prison where prisoners did run their own wings’.

Their work reacted quickly to criticism and they responded to many of the concerns that surrounded the project by aiming to:

> ‘Recruit more Protestants and set the film in a fictional private prison called Burnam. We also toned down the swearing and cut the drug referenced, and promised to emulate Hitchcock and suggest, rather than actually portray violence. The prisoners naturally, felt censored, and arguments ensued. However, we ultimately convinced them that quitting the project would only make the naysayers happy. To their credit, they pushed forward’ (Magill & Marquis-Muradaz in Jennings, 2009, p.110).

To their absolute credit, ESC has fought for their belief in the project, against some of the most fundamental and inherent challenges that ensue when combining theatre with a penal environment, for transformative purposes. Perhaps the most shocking is heard when Magill & Marquis-Muradaz (in Jennings, 2009, pp. 1109-111) explain that there were many provocations:

> ‘which included prisoner’s cells being overturned staff pouring talcum powder over the prisoner’s cell floors, and denying the men obligatory gym visits and ‘out-of-cell’ time, not one of the prisoners retaliated or took the bait. In four weeks of shooting, there was not one incident with any of the prisoners on our film […] but the security department in the prison was resistant to the idea of grouping the ‘bad boys’ together and rewarding them by making them into movie stars’

However, ESC acknowledge that the prisoners themselves were not always easy either:

> ‘They sometimes came on set high on drugs. They didn’t always know their lines. They insisted on wearing their own clothes, which presented a film continuity nightmare. They resented being quite during shooting. A few imagined we were slighting them and walked away. They complained constantly about the food and lack of pay’ (Magill and Marquis-Muradaz, in Jennings, 2009, p.111).

Taking everything into account, it is clear from the research that the ESC has not been short of criticism in their creation of *Mickey B* or work with prisoners generally. They have faced much opposition in creating this work. Wray (2011) documents the project’s tenuous journey when stating that:

> ‘The initial announcement that a group of serving ‘lifers’ had embarked upon a full-length film version of *Macbeth* also caused some controversy in the U.K. press. Reactions were hostile and pejorative, with headlines adopting a correspondingly sensationalist tone. Sensitivity continues to surround the film, *Mickey B* (assumed to be the first feature film produced by prisoners), and, until recently, legal injunctions prohibited this recreation of Shakespeare from public showings and distribution’.

Although the work was produced ‘in 2007 the Northern Irish office and the Northern Irish Prison Service restricted the film from being shown or distributed in the UK or Republic of Ireland for three years after its completion’ (Fischlin, 2014, p.87). A range of events dictated the deal ESC had to strike with prison authorities in not showing the

film at all in Northern Ireland. An important cast member failed to return to prison from compassionate leave. The details of his crime were broadcast all over the press, and:

> ‘Fears that his (and others) involvement in our ‘violent’ film might be publicised could trigger a massive public outcry resulted in cancellation of the BBC feature about the film. The actor playing Ladyboy who had been out of jail for several months was arrested and sent back to prison. Mickey B, Duffer and others rebelled against prison authorities and were separated from other prisoners under Rule 32 which provides for good order and discipline within the prison’ (Magill & Marquis-Muradaz, in Jennings, 2009, p.111).

Unfortunately too, the ESC no longer has access to the men because the group were disbanded by prison authorities.

Mickey B is a useful and important example of ‘prison Shakespeare that invites us to assess its impact on its own terms’ (Wray, 2011). *Mickey B* bridges the fictional with the documentary, and ultimately asks- how can Shakespeare help? The work demonstrates how ‘Shakespeare can transcend locality of exposure via the input of the participants involved, and that institutional frameworks of dissemination are essentially interchangeable’ (Wray, 2011). The project helps to ‘mediate local prison histories, prompt reconsideration of current political sticking-points and bring into circulation questions about guilt and memory that plague the peace process’ (Wray, 2011). The project as a whole:

> ‘Has the moral that violence does not pay and the ESC’s overriding intention is the idea that Shakespeare’s work can provide an educative missive. *Mickey B* invites us to think anew about Shakespeare, his local utility and the reparative cultural work his plays are still enlisted to perform Although the project can’t offer guarantees that inmates will not reoffend following their release […] the process of making *Mickey B* allowed unprecedented developmental opportunities [and] the alternative would have been to do nothing’ (Wray, 2011).

The ESC offers an important example of a prison theatre project that uses Shakespeare's work to aid transformation. There are limitations to the work and the ESC appears (on occasion) to fall victim to the challenges this format of work can face. However, the ESC should be excused from reiterating some of the politics inherently tied to the work they are attempting to deliver, and instead be commended for their attempts to navigate a politically complicated terrain in order to benefit those involved in the work, both prisoner and prison service.

Summary

Overall the work across the chapters dedicated to Shakespeare in prisons explores a wide range of important considerations relevant to prison theatre's challenges. The thesis has explored the general context of prison theatre work, its histories, origins and influences.

The thesis undertook a Renaissance reading of the plays *Measure for Measure* and *Macbeth* in relation to prison and crime. The provocations for practice deduced from these readings will be drawn upon in more specific detail in chapter eight.

The thesis finally assessed the ESC as an example of work that currently exists in combining Shakespeare, prisons and applied theatre. The exploration of ESC demonstrates how tightly woven the challenges embedded in applied theatre formats are. The chapter reiterated challenges found in the complexities of space and environment, the complexities that ensue when using Shakespeare's criminals and to transform individuals, and the assumptive beliefs and culturally constrained values that are often promoted through Shakespeare's use in this environment.

Ultimately the chapter, whilst not covering every single example of Shakespeare in prison, does attempt to provide a comprehensive exploration of specific uses of Shakespeare in prisons, highlighting some important considerations that deserve interrogation upon the creation, production, and continuation of this type of work.

Chapter Six: Disabled Shakespeare

> ***Gloucester:*** [Love] did corrupt frail nature with some bribe,
> To shrink mine arm up like a wither'd shrub;
> To make an envious mountain on my back,
> Where sits deformity to mock my body;
> To shape my legs of an unequal size;
> To disproportion me in every part,
> Like to a chaos, or an unlick'd bear-whelp
> That carries no impression like the dam.
>
> (Shakespeare, 1991, 3.2, p.580)

The following chapters address how and where Shakespeare's work is used within Disability environments. The chapter begins with an exploration of the history of Disability theatre generally, then moves into an interrogation of the challenges of Disability theatre specifically. Here the work addresses challenges with inclusion, and discrimination and exploitation. The chapter then addresses the use of Shakespeare's work in Disability environments, where it currently exists and the articulated benefits of combining the two areas of practice. Each section then explores the importance of interrogating Shakespeare's plays in the intellectual tradition in which they were written. For Disability theatre Shakespeare's *Richard III,* and *Henry VI Part One and Two* are used as demonstrative texts. Finally the chapter concludes with a case study analysis of the Blue Apple Theatre Company, as an example of a community who use Shakespeare's work for the purposes of transformation. The work will explore how the company articulates the benefits of using Shakespeare's work to transform their participants, and analyses challenges that may ensue in the application of Shakespeare alongside a marginalised community.

The chapters ask:

- What are the challenges are posed in theatre attempting to access marginalised communities?

- What values and notions about humanity might Shakespeare depict/ promote through his work?

- What kind of critical attitudes, values and/or assumptions are bound up with this work and/or promoted through it?

- What challenges might Disability theatre face when combining Shakespeare with the intentions of applied theatre?

6.1 The history of Disability theatre

Disabled theatre is 'a specific kind of artistic practice connected to the Disability arts and culture movement. As such it involves artists with Disabilities who pursue an activist perspective, dismantling stereotypes, challenging stigma, and re-imagining Disability as a valued human condition' (Johnston, 2012, p.43). It is also a form of 'integrative theatre, for it attempts to integrate people with Disabilities into theatre and/or drama experience, either as participants or audience' (Warren, Richard & Brimbal, 2007, p.55). Ultimately, theatre amongst the Disabled community is:

> 'about ensuring that Disabled people are at the centre of the creative process, allowing Disability to influence that process. More precisely, it can be defined as theatre which involves a majority of Disabled people, explores a Disability aesthetic and mirrors in some way the lives of Disabled people' (Morrison, 1992).

Generally in theatre there has been a small amount of progress in terms of reflecting Disability on stage (Hargrave, 2015: Sealey: 2015) and in comparison to the other communities explored as part of this thesis, there is currently less written on the work

and movement of theatre with Disabled people generally or cognitive Disability particularly. Disability Studies has emerged only in the last twenty years or so, and Auslander and Sandahl (2009, p.7) explain that this is because:

> 'Unlike race, class, and gender, [Disability] escaped recognition as an important identity rubric for performance scholars. Whereas those involved in using the arts therapeutically have formulated a concept of Disability, albeit a contested one, performance studies—out of negligence rather than overt hostility toward Disabled people or Disability studies—has had no such concept'.

The study of Disability in the *arts* slips between very different epistemologies, Disability studies which explores the study of a certain group of people, and performance studies, which addresses the concepts of theatre. The two are very rarely explored together in a helpful and developed manner (Hargrave, 2015).

Although historically it appears as though an under-interrogation of Disability's position within the realm of theatre is present, there have been more recent developments in the exploration of this field of practice. Over the past three years especially there appears to have been a surge of interest in documenting Disability theatre, and recent publications highlight the growing interest in this area of theatre.[22] In the theatrical field however, Disability Theatre is still grappling to be recognised as having an important place within the world of theatre and the arts. Miller (2016), himself a wheelchair user, personally reflects upon the state and progress of Disability theatre. He states:

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[22] Johnston, K. (2016) *Disability Theatre and Modern Drama,* Kuppers, P. (2017) *Theatre & Disability,* Barton-Farcas, S. (2017) *A Practical Manual for Inclusion in the Arts.*

> ‘Despite the developments by ACE in encouraging diversity, the regional support for Disabled artists and arts professionals together has yet to take full ownership of Disability. There is a lot of surface noise but I wonder, under the radar, how much is changing? Employment of Disabled people in the arts generally remains critically low. Physical access remains a barrier, and the lack of consideration of the issues that ensure participation and equality, […] All of which could go some way to explaining just why so few of us work in this industry’.

Historically, there was a comparatively late establishment of theatre within this area and the inclusion of Disabled performers (in theatre predominantly) developed alongside public acceptance or integration. Companies began to form around the 1970’s. The People Players of Toronto was started in 1974 and New York City’s National Theatre Workshop for the Handicapped (NTWH) was founded in 1977. Closer to home, Graeae Theatre Company was founded in 1980 by Nabil Shaban and currently still operates from Aldershot in Hampshire. The examples represent the earliest theatre companies established specifically for Disabled actors and were formed to ‘combat the exclusion of Disabled people from the theatre’ (Morrison, 1992).

Today, many of the companies who work with physically Disabled actors differ from companies who work with an actor perceived to have intellectual Disabilities; however there are companies who attempt to incorporate both. They all hold in common the aim to prevent isolation and often concentrate upon physical, cognitive, emotional or sensory differences. Disability theatre companies currently operating in the USA and UK include, but are not limited to: Mind the Gap, Birds of Paradise, DIY Theatre Company, The Freewheelers, Dark Horse Theatre, and Ableize. Their work is successful as it involves and respects the needs, values and cultures of people with Disabilities allowing them to shape their own artistic process. Like the prison projects, some of these companies do feature Shakespeare within their work.

6.2 The challenges of Disability theatre

This section will consider the discourses associated with a Disabled community, and the challenges a Disabled community may face upon engaging with theatrical work generally, and the intentions of applied theatre specifically. The chapter will explore: inclusive practices alongside tools of inquiry, and the risk of exploitation.

6.2.1 Inclusion

The idea of inclusion is so dominant throughout projects in this field that it is often the primary goal of the theatrical endeavour (Magill in Pensalfini, 2016: Nicholson, 2015: Arendsen, 2014: Landy, 2012: Dobson, 2011: Balfour, 2004). Performers with Disabilities are afforded opportunities that promote equality, but the benefits for people accessing this form appear to be concerned with the idea of inclusivity rather than transformation. Due to the overarching preoccupation with inclusion, other theatrical necessities (such as those held by applied theatre) are not always captured. The opportunity for transformation relative to applied theatre is often displaced and becomes a secondary consideration, or transformation is viewed as a form of inclusion in itself which does not fully cover the purposes of the transformative intention (see 2.3). Other uses of applied theatre appear to be brushed aside or are articulated as a benefit on the widest possible scale. It becomes evident that the work is not solely occupied with engaging a community in order to discuss issues, or explore prejudice; but more concerned with how ‘performance’ activity can aid the promotion of inclusion, engaging participants with theatre at a general level.

Although the impact of inclusivity may be of benefit to the participants, inclusion may also induce two complications to this form of practice. Firstly, inclusion can represent the undoing of applied theatre’s intentions in a fashion that suggests inclusion

overcomes any need for questioning or interrogation for those involved in the project(s). Secondly, it can limit the quality of the work produced, as the work itself is seen as a 'necessary' addition to demonstrate that some level of inclusion has taken place. Both complications suggest that there is an incompatibility when attempting to combine the purposes of applied theatre with the format of Disabled theatre and if the intentions of applied theatre cannot be realised, then perhaps Disabled theatre is unable to fall under applied theatre's umbrella term (Kellerman, 1992).

Addressing the former point, applied theatre desires to 'question' in relation to social existence and people's place within the world (Prentki & Preston, 2009: Rifkin, 2010). If the intention of applied theatre is to promote levels of inquiry then it is obvious that the benefits would be in developing the focus on Disability culture through raising questions asked too infrequently. However, if questioning does not take place, then the fundamentals of applied theatre may never actually be realised and the work at its most basic level can only ever allow the participants to 'have a go'. The difficult realities for people with Disabilities are avoided instead of explored, limiting the voice of the Disabled community. Therefore projects with the Disabled community may be criticised for the manner in which they represent the Disabled community, rather than allowing it to represent itself, which could be a result of the lack of interrogation, conversation, questioning and inquiry afforded to the participants.

Whilst it is acknowledged that questioning for some Disabled people may be an inherent challenge and fundamental difficulty (because extreme difficulties may prevent questioning from being feasible and/or appropriate) there is simultaneously the risk that projects avoid asking questions due to a preconceived notion that attaining answers would be too difficult. This is a complicated dilemma, a paradox between

needing answers but unable to extract them for multifarious reasons (see 5.2.3). Meth (2015) suggests a view that draws on the paradox of Schrodinger's cat where, in this case, Disability arts can appear to be both itself and its opposite: diverse but unhelpful in its intentions for achieving inclusion only. Therefore a limited interrogation surrounding Disability is fundamentally against work falling into the category of applied theatre, which requires questions to be asked about unique cultural and somatic experiences, aiming to provide 'a valuable conceptual model for the consideration of Disability ' (Auslander & Sandahl, 2009, p.2).

Auslander and Sandahl (2009, p.2) explain that when the project does not raise important questions amongst its participants it becomes unclear as to:

> 'What collaborative strategies Disabled and non-Disabled artists [have] used to bridge the gap between their experiences? […] How do performance events contribute to Disability "cultures," Disability identities, and communication between Disabled and non-Disabled people? What do these performances reveal about who is on the inside of Disability culture and who is on the outside?'

For applied theatre, it is important to answer such questions, and explore the body through its autobiographical power to 'expose how dramatically social representations determine the nature of the Disabled body and the forms of self- knowing attached to it' (Siebers, 2001, pp.737-754).

It can be argued that in some examples of where a Disabled community has been asked to participate with the purposes of applied theatre, the theories of the body, and of social constructionism have failed to take account of both the fact that the Disabled body and the reality of impairment is a way to understand this area of study better (Sieber, 2001, pp.737-754). It is relevant to suggest that tools of inquiry should not only be used to promote the techniques of applied theatre models of work but should

also be promoted as a beneficial method to help people with Disabilities learn more about themselves and the non-Disabled to learn more about others. The suggestion here is that moving into a more applied theatre format of delivery may actually be beneficial to the communities accessing the projects as it affords greater opportunities for exploration, discovery and development. By promoting more than just inclusion, the voice of Disabled people at the heart of the project can be captured and hopefully heard.

A further challenge to the practice is found in the preoccupation with inclusion. It is suggested that to be seen as inclusive some venues are programming 'the first work they came across with a wheelchair and guide dog in it' (Gardner, 2015) and some funders are commissioning work as part of a 'tick box' list to show that some level of inclusion has taken place. The work in this regard has not been helpfully explored or assessed in relation to its merits, but rather funded because of a narrow, bureaucratic 'paint by numbers' attitude toward diversity rather than a well-rounded, flexible approach, which can damage the artistic quality of the work. In this way, applied projects become fractured from their intention, it is no longer about Disabled theatre or the Disabled community, but concerned instead with what should be funded, why and what the outcomes of this might be to groups of people who are commended for their ability to be 'inclusive' (e.g. stakeholders, government, funding bodies, venues (see 1.2)). Although diversity is at the heart of many agendas, better researched and greater resourced organisations are needed in order to prevent Disabled theatre from being seen as merely 'necessary'. To not demean the form Gardner (2015) suggests that:

> 'there needs to be a moving away from incentives and policies that tell us we must include Disabled artists and instead develop advocates

> including Disabled programmers, curators and marketing departments who can assist in widening audiences to think differently about how and where they place work and how they support it'.

The complication is not only relevant to the consideration of inclusion but links to the limitations surrounding agenda and commissioning (see 3.1.3), which can be tightly bound to applied theatre projects, meaning that the challenges faced are complex.

On the one hand, inclusion presents opportunities for involvement and diversity, simultaneously is offers complex challenges bound to agenda and motivating influences. Overall, it is important that the limitations already tightly bound to applied theatre do not demean the intentions of inclusion and that the work is commended on its own merit, not used as a necessity to 'tick a box'. It is further important that inclusion is not used as an excuse to avoid other important theatrical necessities that may be beneficial for a Disabled community.

6.2.2 Discrimination and exploitation

The presentation of Disability and the cultural narrative that surrounds it can therefore affect how people interact with Disability and thus discrimination and exploitation can take place because of how we receive and perceive Disability, the stories that we tell through theatre, and the assumptions that are often offered through the presentation of the Disabled body on stage. MacLean (2014, p.6) explains that 'there are two performance histories that affect the reception of Disabled actors: that of freak shows and that of a history of able-bodied performers playing Disabled characters in theatre productions'. He describes a discriminatory history:

> 'of able-bodied performers playing Disabled characters has meant that the combination of non-Disabled performers in Disabled roles allows for the clear distinction between the real and the fictional; but when this

> boundary is broken there is a suggestion that the audience may feel discomfort, and the physical visible markers on a Disabled individual's body can interfere with the audience's reception of full transformation into a semiotic character' (2014, p.7).

Therefore the audience may not know how to respond to the work and their discomfort can mean that they don't return to watch theatre that includes Disability, or the extent of their discomfort means they do not attend in the first place. Hargrave (2015) explains how the lack of familiarity with Disability and the manner in which theatre can defy expectations can result in discriminative reactions to Disabled people on the stage. He demonstrates through Mind the Gap's production of *Boo* (2009) how this level of discrimination can manifest. Hargrave (2015, p.19) states:

> 'Audiences get confused and worried […] they enjoy the show, but they are not sure […] they worry that the actors might make mistakes and that the play might fall apart. People like to categorise things and put labels on other people to help understand the world. When they can't do this, they feel uncertain and confused. These feelings can cause a sort of tension that can make audiences feel uncomfortable […] it causes a range of reactions and responses from audience and critics. It raises questions about the ownership of the work, identity of the actors as Disabled people, the support the work needed during planning, rehearsal, and on stage, and the power held by non-Disabled co-workers. Audiences enjoy watching […] but they also experience feelings of confusion, doubt, fear, irritation and uncertainty'.

Alongside discrimination, exploitative treatment of Disabled communities can also be identified in the reception of Disabled actors and the mechanisms that make up 'freak shows' which can be the result of removing any level of fiction within a performance. This links to Conquergood's Four Ethical Pitfalls generally and his study of the curator's exhibitionism specifically (see 3.1.4). The curator's exhibitionism is born of the fascination of promoting differences in line with museum exhibits or the practice of astonishing the audience rather than understanding the community. The manifest sin

is sensationalism (Conquergood, 1985, p.7) and Maclean (2014, p.12) demonstrates this by making parallels between Disability theatre and the circus, when stating:

> ‘The circus invites audiences to stare at a variety of attractions: animals, trained acrobats and the “freaks.” All attractions contain something that is outside of the daily experience of the spectator, though the content of circus performances differed through time the audience would only ever see them for the oddities and limitations of their physical bodies. It thrives on contrasting the everyday and the extraordinary. It reinforces the gap between the performer or “freak” versus audience or “norm”. The problem is that this dichotomy necessarily disfavours the Disabled person by keeping him or her outside of the realm of the normal. The Disabled performer is allowed onstage with the caveat that their performance highlights difference’.

Although it is not to say that all performances offer a sensationalised reaction to the Disabled body on stage; productions that do continue the trend of ‘profiting from ‘abnormal bodies’ and the spectator’s sensual or phenomenal experience of the Disabled performer’s real physical body’ (MacLean, 2014, p.13) raise the question as to whether ‘Disabled performers [can] appear on stage with the expectation that audiences will see more than just their physical body? Can their Disability be just another trait like hair colour or weight?’ (MacLean, 2014, p.6). If it cannot then how can theatre account for a broader cultural imagination or a representation of Disability that is indiscriminate and/or lacks exploitation? The overriding challenge is that Disability theatre, and what it represents, is contested (McKenzie, Schwartz & Watemeyer, 2018). It remains difficult to distinguish ‘inclusion from exploitation, validation from fetishisation’ (McKenzie, Schwartz & Watemeyer, 2018, p.224). Any applied theatre practitioner delivering projects amongst Disabled communities can therefore be at risk of appearing to work with that community for intentions that may appear dishonourable or discriminate. Those who peripherally engage with the work (e.g. the audience, practitioner, and funder) can also be at risk of doing so for

exploitative intentions. Therefore the work is dogged with a tradition of discrimination and exclusion.

From the collected research, the challenges of the work are associated with where this work places itself and is placed by others. The findings suggest that the challenges of the work are wide ranging and include, but are not limited to: audience reaction and support, funding and agendas, exploitation and the reception of the Disabled body on the stage. Arguably, the most significant challenge is linked very specifically to the idea of Disabled theatre being a form of inclusive practice, and the difficulty faced when undertaking a project for inclusive purposes only. In relation to an applied theatre format, the practitioners of Disability theatre can potentially dilute the possibilities for enquiry and endanger the possibilities for transformation due to the dominant desire to achieve levels of inclusion. All challenges limit, and at times prevent the opportunity to develop Disability theatre generally and are cause for concern for a project hoping to use Shakespeare's work to aid transformation amongst the Disabled community specifically.

6.3 The history of Shakespeare and Disability theatre

Whilst the thesis recognizes that there is evidence of some development regarding the scope of work surrounding Disabled theatre generally and its considerations of Shakespeare's engagement with Disability, it also highlights the underdeveloped area represented by Shakespeare's use for applied theatre purposes amongst Disabled communities specifically. It is also important to acknowledge that the specific projects and/or performances that include Shakespeare with Disabled communities present much more recent and sporadic work within this field, especially compared to that of Prison Shakespeare.

Graeae Theatre Company is a company based in the UK ‘composed of artists and managers with physical and sensory Disabilities. It was founded in 1980 by Nabil Shaban and Richard Tomlinson’ (Graeae.org, n.d.) and represents one of the longest running theatre companies that works with the Disabled community. Since 2013 the company have been working with Dhaka Theatre, Bangladesh. They offer ‘a long-term training programme’ (Graeae.org, n.d.) with young Disabled actors and in 2016 they were asked to mark the 400th anniversary of Shakespeare, as part of *Shakespeare Lives*. The project was initiated by the British Council, Dhaka Theatre and current Artistic Director of Graeae, Jenny Sealey. The project that consisted of one Disabled actor who spoke and one Deaf actor, who used Bengali Sign Language, played all the main characters in Shakespeare’s *Romeo and Juliet*. For Sealey (in BritishCouncil, 2016) the project is important because ‘it challenges people’s perceptions of what Deaf and Disabled people can do’ and the story of Romeo and Juliet was regarded as an ideal source to help ‘create a world where everyone has the right to love and be loved.’

The company provide a well-established body of work with the Disabled community and highlight the cultural and geographical breadth to which projects of this nature can reach. They represent one of the longest serving Disabled Companies in the UK.

Side by Side Theatre Company who formed in Stourbridge in 1997 is an independent theatre company, giving learning Disabled actors, many who have Down’s syndrome, the opportunity to develop skills in the performing arts (sbstcs, 1997). In 2009 they took *Tempest in a Teacup* to the Edinburgh Fringe Festival to critical acclaim. They were then chosen to work with the RSC’s Open Stages on its production Illyria-On-Sea, based on Shakespeare’s *Twelfth Night* in 2014. The company describe the project as ‘a triumph for inclusion’ (sbstcs, 1997). Their current production of *As We*

Like It launched in June and August of 2018. More than 20 years of experience marks this company as well-established, their continued use of Shakespeare's work demonstrates Shakespeare's popularity amongst cast and creative.

Taking Flight Theatre Company was established in 2007 in Wales with the 'aim to work with groups of people who have traditionally been under-represented in theatre, film and television' (Garside, 2016). In the summer of 2016 they performed *Romeo and Juliet* with a range of Disabled actors. Their use of Shakespeare includes the plays: *A Winter's tale, As you Like It, Twelfth Night* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream.* Garside (2016) highlights the aims of the company when explaining that:

> 'Everyone feeling a part of the production is key to Taking Flight's ethos, inclusive theatre company- in terms of both audience and performers. This means that D/deaf actors are a part of the performance, as well as Disabled actors, and the performance is fully inclusive for the audience with both BSL interpretation and audio description. This isn't the kind of 'add on' inclusivity that audiences might expect; inclusivity is part of the performance'.

While being a fairly recent addition to the collection of theatre companies that work with Disabled communities in the UK, Taking Flight is establishing opportunities to make theatre accessible. They have consistently used Shakespeare's work as a tool to aid such accessibility. Their most recent production will be Shakespeare's *The Tempest* at Hijinx Theatre in the autumn of 2018.

More recently (2016), the BBC produced a documentary about Storme Toolis (herself a wheelchair user due to cerebral palsy) and her company of Disabled actors who attempt to redefine Juliet in their production of *Romeo and Juliet*. Toolis' *Redefining Juliet* features women in her work that would not normally be considered to play the role of Juliet. Toolis hopes to use the work as a way to open people's minds to the

abilities of all actors, to start to see Disability as a positive thing and to embrace difference and diversity within the theatre (Toolis, 2016). Using a mixture of verbatim and Shakespeare's original text, six actresses explored the role of Juliet, transporting the character right into the heart of the diversity of today's 21st century (School of Arts, 2016). Toolis (in Hemley, 2016) emphasised it was not a: 'Disability-led' project but rather about difference and diversity and what that means'. Toolis aims to use the project to make theatre more of a 'level playing field'. Through her work she demonstrates how although 'there has been a small amount of progress in terms of reflecting Disability on stage, now is the time to be doing these things and having these kinds of conversations' (Toolis in Hemley, 2016).

Toolis currently plans to tour the show and holds ambitions to audition for Juliet at the RSC. Her work represents some of the most recent explorations into the uses of Shakespeare's plays with Disabled people and demonstrates the growing fascination with the levels of inclusion Shakespeare's work is claimed to invite.

From the collection of companies presented, the range of the work is really only sufficient and currently there appears to be only a minimal amount of companies undertaking projects of this specific nature, compared to the other areas of marginalisation explored as part of this thesis. Realistically, the field is light-years away from where it needs to be (Siebers, 2001), and one of the biggest challenges of this field may in fact be the lack of interrogation and attention it has been afforded. Despite this challenge, it is clear that there are companies who look to Shakespeare's work as an appropriate stimulus to use amongst the Disabled community. The examples demonstrate the reach of the work, and whilst it may appear less extensive; it is work

that attempts to engage a Disabled community through the purposes of applied theatre, through the of Shakespeare's plays.

6.4 Shakespeare's Disabled, Disabled Shakespeare: a Renaissance reading of Shakespeare and Disability (through the plays *Henry VI Part Two* and *Three* and *Richard III*)

To be able to ascertain society's attitudes and reactions toward Disability and Disabled people would be 'almost impossible' (Barnes, 1991, p.1). Among the many suggestions that have been made is the view that Renaissance 'perceptions of impairment and Disability are coloured by a deep-rooted psychological fear of the unknown, the anomalous and the abnormal' (Douglas, 1966) and 'it is widely acknowledged that their perceptions of normality are partly if not wholly determined by […] the natural transmission of ideology and culture' (Barnes, 1991, p.47). In developing this argument, Garland-Thomson (2003, p.196) suggests that:

> 'Disability is a construct which means little outside of the age which makes meaning of its metaphor. We must, then, seek to understand [Disability] within the context of its age, by looking at religion, dramatic, social and political presumptions constructing Disability. It is only in this way that the formula which equates Disability and deviance can be understood in *its* time, rather than accepted, without question, in ours'.

It is therefore important to explore Renaissance ideology surrounding Disability to fully appreciate this particular point in history where 'a communally accepted set of values and beliefs' (Barnes, 1991, p.47) influenced Shakespeare's audience and determined their reactions to the Disabled community. It is also important to acknowledge that examples of what we now call 'Disability' was not necessarily an operational identity in the Renaissance and the word itself 'did not circulate in England until around 1545' (Barnes, 1991, p.47). Even then, Wilson (1993) explains:

> ‘It most often intimated something more about an individual’s general incapacity than the fact or state of having …. a physical or mental condition that prompted said incapacity […] therefore the emergence of "Disability" occurs later than the Renaissance and in tandem with a medical discourse that classifies, regulates, and constructs bodies as "normal" or "abnormal"’.

Disability was not a timeless universal. It was described and defined differently in the Renaissance and therefore it is important to look at historically specific ways in which the body was represented in the Renaissance. This chapter will explore a collection of Shakespeare’s plays that feature the character of Richard through the lens of a modern-day interpretation of the language of Disability (as this is the only tool we have to achieve levels of understanding); but with clear and important reference to the historical implications and influences of the period in which Shakespeare was creating his work. Therefore, whilst it should be acknowledged that individual perceptions and ideas vary slightly and there is no universal approach to Disability, historical and cultural concepts and responses to what we now know to be Disability and/or Disabled are usually more rigid and the thesis looks to these for an indication as to potentially significant influences upon Shakespeare’s presentation of Disability (Oliver, 1981 & 1990: Hanks & Hanks, 1980).

Until the seventeenth century people with Disabilities were ‘rejected by their families, along with other disadvantaged groups such as the sick, the elderly and the poor, relying upon the ineffectual tradition of Christian charity for subsistence’ (Bloy, 2002, 32). The seventeenth century represented vast developments in the views of people with Disabilities as, by this time, people with Disabilities were integrated into society and were allowed to marry, work and have children. Bloy (2002, pp.32-46) explains how Disabled people:

> ‘were still not considered a state’s responsibility and Disability was characterised as an individual’s problem with the state’s role to ‘manage’ them, however the Elizabethan Poor Law included a requirement for each parish to support Disabled people and the old – which set the tone for the next 300 years of state administration of Disabled people’s lives’.

Discrimination however did not disappear entirely during the Elizabethan period and often continued in the form of entertainment and ridicule: ‘every Disability from idiocy to insanity to diabetes and bad breath was a welcome source of amusement' (Gray & Cox, 2014, p.65).

Shakespeare’s first depiction of Disability ‘was also his funniest’ (Wilson, 1993) and arrives in act two of *Henry VI* between Gloucester and Simpcox:

> ***King Henry VI:*** What, hast thou been long blind and now restored?
> ***Simpcox:*** Born blind, an't please your grace
> ***Cardinal:*** What, art thou lame?
> ***Simpcox:*** Ay, God Almighty help me!
> ***Suffolk:*** How camest thou so?
> ***Simpcox:*** A fall off of a tree.
> ***Gloucester:*** How long hast thou been blind?
> ***Simpcox:*** Born so, master.
> ***Gloucester:*** What colour is this cloak of?
> ***Simpcox:*** Red, master; red as blood.
> ***Gloucester:*** Why, that's well said. What colour is my gown of?
> ***Simpcox:*** Black, forsooth: coal-black as jet.
> ***Gloucester:*** Then, Saunder, sit there, the lyingest knave in Christendom. If thou hadst been born blind, thou mightest as well have known all our names as thus to name the several colours we do wear. Sight may distinguish of colours, but suddenly to nominate them all, it is impossible. My lords, Saint Alban here hath done a miracle; and would ye not think his cunning to be great, that could restore this cripple to his legs again?
> ***Simpcox:*** O master, that you could!
> ***Gloucester:*** Well, sir, we must have you find your legs. Sirrah beadle, whip him till he leap over that same stool.
>
> *[after the beadle hath hit him once, he leaps over the stool and runs away; and they follow and cry ‘A Miracle’]*

(Shakespeare, 1991, 2.1, pp.539-540).

The hostility and suspicion presented throughout the scene establishes an undesirable Renaissance tradition; despite the fact that Gloucester is correct in Simpcox's forgery.

Other Disabilities can be seen in the blindness of Old Gobbo in *The Merchant of Venice,* and Gloucester in *King Lear.* Physical deformities can be found in Richard (*Henry VI Part Two and Three Richard III*), Thersites (*Cymberline*), and Caliban (*The Tempest)*. Caliban in the dramatic personae for *The Tempest* is even described as "a savage and deformed slave" and is 'Shakespeare's final, and in some ways fullest, stigmatized character: he is certainly physically deformed, potentially racially different, arguably mentally challenged, and allegedly a bastard child of the devil' (Wilson, 1993).

Physical illness is presented in the form of epilepsy or 'the falling sickness' in *Julius Caesar, Henry IV, Othello, Macbeth* and figuratively in *King Lear.* Although it was historically known that Caesar had epilepsy (or at least Plutarch wrote that he did) the presentation of epilepsy throughout the play *Julius Caesar* is more of a dramatization of the condition rather than the thing itself.[23] Therefore it is not shown on stage, but is presented from Cassius' interpretation of Caesar's fit:

> ***Cassius:*** He had a fever when he was in Spain,
> And when the fit was on him, I did mark
> How he did shake: 'tis true, this god did shake;
> His coward lips did from their colour fly,
> And that same eye whose bend doth awe the world
> Did lose his lustre: I did hear him groan
> (Shakespeare, 1991, 1.2, p.822)

[23] Plutarch's Lives also known as Parallel Lives, is a series of biographies of famous men arranged to highlight common moral virtues. It is an important source of information to document the times in which the Greeks and Romans lived and it is assumed that Shakespeare referred to this work to create the history plays set around this time period.

Of intellectual Disability, Hargrave writes that ‘within the boundaries of Elizabethan drama, there was never a clear-cut distinction between what would now be called intellectual impairment and it’s opposite’ (2015, p.139). However the role of the fool throughout a range of Shakespeare’s work points to a provisional form of this Disability and in reaction to the historical counterpart it was common at the time for a court jester to be a poor or Disabled boy. Minton (2011) explains that:

> ‘the Fool, in Shakespeare's time, would have been a person with developmental Disabilities (mental retardation or autism), and though today we tend to see Shakespeare's fools solely as jesters and clowns, a close reading of remarks about Touchstone in *As You Like It* and Feste in *Twelfth Night* reveals the true nature of these characters’.

> ***Jaques:*** Is not this a rare fellow, my lord? he's as good at anything, and yet a fool.
> ***Duke:*** He uses his folly like a stalking-horse, and under the presentation of that he shoots his wit.
>
> (Shakespeare, 1991, 5.4, p.241).

Whether or not Shakespeare presented this collection of characters as having a Disability in relation to the modern-day understanding of the word’s meaning, or whether the audience is simply attaching their modern-day understanding of Disability to the character through their own interpretation of the text and traits of the role is difficult to ascertain, what is clear is that Shakespeare had an awareness of difference, both physical and intellectual. Through both an historical understanding of ‘Disability’ and through a modern lens of what Disability means today it becomes clear that throughout the Renaissance period and presented within Shakespeare’s texts, people with Disabilities were viewed in mixed regard as humorous, as a source of

entertainment and ridicule, alongside superstition, with suspicion, as a joke or as a joker.

The character of Richard/Gloucester ‘is often taken up as Shakespeare's clearest foregrounding and interpreting of physical difference’ (Wilson, 2017). As such Richard is an important character to explore in relation to the content of this chapter. Gloucester and Richard are the same character. In *Henry VI Part Two and Three* he is Prince Richard, Duke of Gloucester and Richard when he becomes King in *Richard III.* To alleviate confusion he is simply referenced as Richard throughout.

The central focus of this chapter will be around the aforementioned plays and the character of Richard. The presentation of Disability as a form of evil, other character’s reactions to Richard, binaries presented throughout the play, Richard’s own understanding of his Disability, Richard’s ability to perform his Disability for purposes of manipulation, and alternative interpretations of the body within the character of Richard, will be explored.

Mitchell & Snyder (2002, p.102) discuss:

> ‘The kind of early modern Disability Richard displays from contemporary discourses of Disability. Positioning the play at the "threshold" of scientific attention to Disabled bodies in the eighteenth century, *Richard III* is a Renaissance version of late medieval attitude toward deformity’.

However and despite the modern implications of the term ‘Disability’, there is no doubt that Richard’s presentation is purposefully as something ‘different’ and Williams’ (2009, p.4) account of the play in relation to Disability theory suggests that:

> ‘the play as a Renaissance version of late medieval attitudes toward deformity, focus attempts both to preserve Disability as an identity

> category that occurs later than the early modern period and to provide a trans-historical account of its emergence as identity'.

Throughout the plays, Richard's physical deformity is an integral focus of physical challenges and differences to the 'normative'. Metzler (2016) helps to classify Richard as one of Shakespeare's 'Disabled' characters, when she explains that he falls into the category of 'extreme deformations or monstrosities; those whose physical forms did not match the most basic humans, normative standards'. The inclusion of Richard's hunchback and clubfoot places the character firmly within the Renaissance classification of Disabled. Throughout the plays it is clear that Shakespeare asks the audience to pay attention to the ''deformed' body of Richard in order to explore the attitudes of those reacting to someone 'born into a world which placed a high premium upon physical normality' (Barnes, 1991, p.2). Richard's awareness of his differences is also acute when stating:

> *'*[Love] did corrupt frail nature with some bribe,
> To shrink mine arm up like a wither'd shrub;
> To make an envious mountain on my back,
> Where sits deformity to mock my body;
> To shape my legs of an unequal size;
> To disproportion me in every part,
> Like to a chaos, or an unlick'd bear-whelp
> That carries no impression like the dam'.
>
> (Shakespeare, 1991, 3.2, p.580)

Throughout the 'Middle-Ages people with Disabilities were the subject of superstition, persecution and rejection with Disability known to be associated with witchcraft' (Haffter, 1968). *Richard III* presents how ghosts, bad omens, curses and prophetic dreams are a constant feature in his life. The supernatural is constantly present and even Richard's downfall is the fulfilment of a prophecy of divine will. Throughout the

play there are also moments when Richard blames his Disability and physical deformity on the machinations of witches, he states:

> ‘Then be your eyes the witness of this ill:
> See how I am bewitch’d; behold mine arm
> Is, like a blasted sapling, wither’d up:
> And this Edward’s wide, that monstrous witch,
> Consorted with the harlot strumpet Shore,
> That by their witchcraft thus have marked me’
>
> (Shakespeare, 1991, 3.4, p.616).

However, an alternative is ‘tacit throughout and expressed emblematically throughout the plays through the choruses of women who oppose [Richard]’ (West, 2009, p.118). The interpretation is founded in the idea that Richard’s deformity is the result of the failure to grow in the woman’s womb. The suggestion here is that Shakespeare had a level of medical understanding when he presents both character and narrative to diagnose Richard’s difference as a matter of ‘failure to form’, rather than association with witchcraft. Hobgood (in Williams, 2009) considers this engagement (amongst many others found within the play) as an example of ‘medical discourse of its own moment, pointing out that characters repeatedly read Richard’s body according to emerging ideas of diagnosis and correction advanced by early modern physicians’. Williams (2009) however emphasises that whilst the play does ‘anticipate modern ideas of Disability […] Richard III’s deformity is an attempt to conceptualise the Renaissance as a time that […] would have understood this body as evil’, and it is true that throughout the Middle Ages people with a Disability were associated with evil (Haffter, 1968). Barnes (1991, p.2) progresses this point of debate when explaining that:

> ‘Those that were deformed and Disabled were seen as 'changelings' or the Devil's substitutes for humans. […] any form of physical or mental

> impairment was the result of divine judgement for wrongdoing pervasive throughout the British Isles in this period. And the association between Disability and evil was not limited to the layman'.

From the beginning of the play the presentation of Richard as 'evil' is evident and even Richard synonymises himself with words such as 'false', 'treacherous', he has 'laid plots' and has 'inductions dangerous'. He successfully woos Anne after killing her husband, 'he slanders the Queen, he detains her kin and eventually, he challenges the rightful succession to the throne […] Richard exhibits a shameless irreverence for family and for tradition and is cast immediately in opposition of good' (Eyler, 2010, p.192). For the Renaissance audience Richard's Disability is the marker of evil 'because that is what lingering medieval perceptions of Disability had trained them to see' (Eyler, 2010, p.192). Therefore, Richard's bad actions meant that his body had to be deformed to visually reflect his moral corruption (Bromley, 2013, p.43). Quayson (2012, p.97) explains that:

> 'Richard's Disability is deformity operating in a moral register, the Disabled body is one in which physical difference is overlaid with negative implications because of what it suggests about the moral character of the person who displays bodily difference'.

These bodily differences are captured throughout the play via a range of important and theatrical techniques and they go a long way in explaining medieval reactions to Disability and difference.

The insults used against Richard often reference the 'outward manifestation of the inward malignity' (Eyler, 2010, p.194), but they are also important as they present 'a variety of negative ways in which others view his body and attempt to employ its associations in their own struggles for political agency. The play offers viewpoints that

‘anatomize and deprecate the body Richard performs’ (Williams, 2009, p.6). The female characters in the play often suggest that Richard displays features of monstrosity and are negative about his form. Anne and Elizabeth describe him as a ‘diffused infection of a man’, ‘hedgehog’, ‘bottled spider’, and ‘foul bunch-backed toad’, terms used to insult (Williams, 2009). Queen Margaret articulates Richard’s body in bestial terms when stating:

> **‘**Thou elvish-marked, abortive, rooting hog,
> Thou that wast sealed in thy nativity
> The slave of nature and the son of hell,
> Thou slander of thy heavy mother’s womb,
> Thou loathed issue of thy father’s loins,
> Thou rag of honours, thou detested’
>
> (Shakespeare, 1991, 1.3, p.603).

Words used against Richard not only reflect the negativity towards Disabled people but connote the visual clues needed for Renaissance audiences to understand Richard’s motive, desire, and evil intent.

Binaries are a further device Shakespeare utilises to highlight Richard’s evil and bodily difference. Richmond is a character not only used to overthrow Richard, but placed throughout the play in opposition to Richard characteristically. Richard is the evil to Richmond’s pure goodness, ‘when placed next to this hero, then, it is easy and exciting to see both the antagonist and protagonist on completely opposite terms; they both become binaries’ (Alexander, 2011, p.15). Richard’s body is marked as deficient and the:

> ‘Play ends with the figure of Richmond as the fantasy of able body: he is the warrior who is properly integrated into his family structure and will produce rightful heirs for the throne […] his kingship will usher in a newly perfect body for the state’ (Williams, 2009, p.6).

This is most clearly depicted in Richmond's speech in Act Five:

> ***Richmond:*** O, now let Richmond and Elizabeth,
> The true succeeders of each royal house,
> By God's fair ordinance conjoin together,
> And let their heirs, God, if Thy will be so,
> Enrich the time to come with smooth-faced peace,
> With smiling plenty and fair prosperous days,
> Abate the edge of traitors, gracious Lord,
> That would reduce these bloody days again
> And made poor England weep forth streams of blood
>
> (Shakespeare, 1991, 5.8, p.634).

The combination of Richmond and Richard's binaries of body and state are also metaphorically important. Eyler (2010, p.190) explains that:

> 'Historically, Richard's fictional impairment can be read as a metaphor for, not just an evil ruler, but for a corrupt state. The underlying implication is that a nation cannot function as a Disabled body-this would be understood by the Tudor dynasty, the early modern period and Shakespeare's original audience'.

As an historical metaphor we accept this binary as part of the discourse of the time and the internal and external planes of Richard's operations in relation to their historical implications which are reduced to the 'demonstration of Renaissance beliefs about the continuity between inner morality and outward physical forms' (Williams, 2009, p.2), power and state. However as Williams (2009, p.4) argues:

> 'what Shakespeare does even further is suggest that Richard is powerful in alignment with modern concepts of what it means to be Disabled […] and instead Richard as a dismodern subject challenges a binary of able/Disabled bodies […] the subject sees that the metanarratives are only socially created and accepts them as that'.[24]

[24] Dismodern in reference to Lennard Davis' term which is 'the reading of Disability as a set of

Therefore the binary may work in highlighting good against evil, but it doesn't necessarily mean that Disability is essential in playing the binary. Alexander (2011, p.120) explains that although:

> 'Richard is articulate, we don't want Richmond to be bumbling […] Richard is cunning but Richmond should not be daffy […] equally as important, just because Richard has a Disability, should Richmond be able bodied? The answer is no'.

These are moral not physical binaries and in all other manners the characters are demonstrated to compete on the same plane.

Reading the play in its historical tradition demonstrates Shakespeare's use of the unseen being depicted in the more visual clues of Disability and therefore Shakespeare's audience are seen to need the metaphor to understand the characterisation. Williams (2009, p.7) warns that 'it should not be enough for today's audiences to accept that Richard wields evil simply because he is deformed', therefore other devices of character investigation are needed to understand Richard's Disability.

Richard's own understanding of his Disability is important to explore in regards to presentation, consideration and understanding of the deformed body and its connections to Renaissance ideologies and concepts. At surface level Richard may be seen to despise his body, his opening soliloquy and the manner in which he describes that he 'has no delight to pass away the time/ unless to spy my shadow in the sun and descant on my own deformity' (Shakespeare, 1991, 1.1, p.596) suggests that he hates his Disability. His language also suggests that he regards himself as

relations between the body and the world, relations in which physical difference may be aided by compensatory intervention and used for powerful effect' (Davis, 2002).

unable to pursue any type of norm, when stating: ‘But I, that am not shaped for sportive tricks/Nor made to court an amorous looking-glass’ (Shakespeare, 1991, 1.1, p.596). Medieval belief too would dictate that any one of Richard’s physical differences would impair him from participating in the ‘normal functions of every-day society’, however the complexities of the character suggest that this is not at all the case and that ‘Richard is far more than *just* a character with physical impairment […] and is therefore a slippery character for Disability studies to tackle’ (Eyler, 2010, pp.190-191). This is because Richard is successful in not only manipulating his fellow players, but also in manipulating the audience as to when to see his body as associated with positive or negative rhetoric. In fact one of the more significant aspects of Richard’s interactions with his Disability is that throughout the play he challenges the idea that people with Disabilities are lesser or more incapable beings. Furthermore, by cleverly presenting his Disabled form as an excuse for his actions he not only presents an understanding of his form and its implications historically, but he is also able to use his deformed body as a distraction from his political manoeuvres. Williams (2009, p.7) states that Richard:

> ‘aware of the negative associations of his body, wields his appearance as an excuse, claiming his deformity as evidence of inability […] there is not much Richard can’t do, and to do these things, he puts his body on view, using multiple interpretations and expectations it prompts to achieve his ambition and the crown he desires’.

Therefore, Richard’s ‘misshapen’ form affords him agency through manipulation and it seems that ‘Richard was more Disabled by religious, dramatic, social, and political constructs, then he was by his hunch back’ (Eyler, 2010, p.193).

One alternative interpretation of Richard’s Disability surrounds the idea that Richard’s Disability works from representations of propaganda. Shakespeare’s play drew from sources that make a point of Richard’s appearance (Williams, 2009), for example

Thomas More's *History of King Richard III* which describes Richard as 'little of stature, ill-featured of limbs, crook-backed, his left shoulder much higher than his right, hard-favoured of visage' (More, 1924). This text has political connotations because More needed to 'deny Richard in keeping with the Tudor monarchy in power at the time, therefore the presentation of body is also politically driven' (Williams, 2009). In modern literary studies his body has been important in promoting a distinctive shape relative to a 'fractured and turbulent English history, a monstrous political figure who usurps the throne, and a demonstration of Renaissance beliefs about the continuity between inner morality and outward physical forms' (Williams, 2009).

Buckingham's reactions to Richard in the play are of further interest. Enticed by Richard into his murderous scheming and machinations, he knows the depth of Richard's plots. By the third act, it is Buckingham who is able to plead Richard's cause without one reference to his body, and instead refers to the weight of history and Richard's patriarchal lineage in shifting the focus from body to political sovereignty, particularly when Richard states: 'Withal, I did infer your lineaments/ Being the right idea of your father/Both in your form and nobleness of mind' (Shakespeare, 1991, 3.7, p.618). Williams (2009, p.7) writes that:

> 'most significantly, any resonance of Richard's deformed body is transferred to the nation of England as a whole, which is now situated as a precariously ailing body in need of virtuous intervention Richard himself will provide […] Buckingham re-inscribes Richard's deformity upon the nation and casts Richard as the cure for its bodily lack'.

Therefore, by the conclusion of the play, and through the articulation of Richard by Buckingham and Richard himself, his Disability is no longer foundational to his character. Buckingham becomes an everyman whose ultimate redemption arrives when turning his back on Richard. This is due to Buckingham realising the extent of

Richard's evil, but at no stage does Buckingham infer that this is due to Richard's deformed body, suggesting that Shakespeare recognises each person's responsibility for their actions, that Richard is evil in his core and this is not because of his physical surface. Williams (2009, p.6) progresses this argument when writing that 'the notion of deformity as physical lack is finally served from Richard's body to exist instead as a metaphysical label attached to other objects to justify political ends'. Richard then, can be seen to 'play' or 'perform' his Disability as a strategy for power and gain, and despite the contemporary reaction to Disability being one of pity, at no point do we have the sense that we are supposed to feel this for Richard. He frightens and intimidates and becomes the quintessential villain. The text, Richard's soliloquies, actions, interactions and machinations allow Shakespeare to eliminate pity and move the focus from body to motive. It should be remembered that throughout the play Richard is successful in wooing women, fulfils his duties as Duke, serves as Lord Protector, becomes King and leads his army into battle-in which he also fights. Therefore, Shakespeare 'forces the audience to question whether or not he even has a Disability: a hunchback, the text tells us, yes; but a Disability, the text tells us, no' (Eyler, 2010, p.190).

Ultimately, through the character of Richard, Shakespeare uses Disability as a cultural clue to add effect to Richard's character, particularly in relation to evil. However Richard is not limited and Shakespeare throughout the play presents radical thinking about Disability (Alexander, 2011). Jackson (2014, p.4) even goes so far as to imply that:

> 'in presenting Shakespeare in alignment with modern concepts of what it means to be Disabled, Shakespeare appears somewhat ahead of his time or thinking; although he does not embrace Richard's deformities,

> he does utilise them, and at times he appears to go so far as to understand them'.

Despite the limitations and liabilities of reading Richard through a Renaissance context of Disability, what this type of investigation affords is an opportunity to consider the multifarious ways in which we can speak about Disability when we encounter it in Shakespeare's texts, and therefore, as Wilson (1993) explains, Shakespeare's:

> 'texts can be used to generate and support theories of Disability […] and Richard's position in the trajectory of Disabled identity offers to Shakespeare studies a rich opportunity for new understanding about the power of the deformed body, even as careful attention to the play opens up new possibilities for thinking about Disability in the Renaissance'.

The differences historically in the meaning of Disability are of paramount importance throughout any investigation of this work. The play provides a depiction of the absolute adversity that Richard must endure because of the reception to his Disability. However Richard is, in the main, able to succeed with all of his endeavours. Through the character of Richard, Shakespeare is able to provide a dynamic consideration of the body, its challenges, limitations and opportunities.

Richard III, Henry VI Part one & two offer opportunities to 'think about Disabled identity in the Renaissance as a complex negotiation of discourses of deformity and monstrosity as well as in relation to bodily contingency that reveals the instability of all bodies' (Williams, 2009, p.6). This investigation affords an opportunity to consider the multifarious ways in which we can 'speak about Disability when we encounter it in Shakespeare's texts, and it was shown how Shakespeare's texts can be used to generate and support theories of Disability' (Wilson, 1993) if it is used as a tool for study and interrogation. The plays explored throughout this chapter are rich in

important considerations regarding the Disabled body which will be drawn upon more specifically in chapter eight's provocations of practice.

6.5 Blue Apple Theatre Company: a case study

The Blue Apple Theatre Company (Blue Apple) was founded in 2005 by Jane Jessop, with support from Winchester Mencap, in order to 'provide opportunities for those with learning difficulties to participate in theatre and dance and to develop the social ability, behavioral and performance skills of individuals with a wide range of learning Disabilities' (Blue Apple). [25] The company work with a range of participants who are aged 16 years or over and 'while some actors do present a range of Disabilities, such as autism (including Asperger syndrome), Down's syndrome and behavioural difficulties, the company is also inclusive to people both with and without learning difficulties – what matters is a desire to take part and to make a contribution' (Blue Apple).

In 2009 the company employed their first Artistic Director (Peter Clerke), and became a fully independent registered charity by 2013.[26] The company is 'based in Winchester, Hampshire but perform nationally with an established, expanding touring network. The company provides a programme of dance and drama sessions tailored to individual needs, and [they] normally work with over 70 people' (Blue Apple).

[25] Now known as Winchester Gold, the company is a non-profit, local charity organisation that believes that people should be treated as equals and given the same respect and opportunities as everyone else. That means full choice and control in their lives, such as where to live, work and socialise. (Winchester, n.d.)

[26] Clerke was appointed in autumn 2009 as an arts consultant and by 2012 became the company's first Artistic Director. He has worked with the playwright William Jessop to create various productions including promenade performances of A Midsummer Night's Dream 2010, and adaptations of Much Ado About Nothing for both the touring and main company productions in 2014.

Developments in 2008 saw the company evolve, introducing an intensive theatre training scheme for auditioned performers known as ‘Apple Core’. Their website describes how ‘in 2011 six Apple Core actors (four of the six had Downs syndrome) created their first major touring production *‘Living without Fear’* which addressed Disability hate crime. The company is now established and produces two professional theatre shows and one touring production each year’ (Blue Apple).

The overarching aims of the company can be found in their belief that the ‘work enables and empowers its performers, challenging perceptions and changing expectations’ (Blue Apple) and they ultimately desire to identify ‘the effect its work has on the social and personal development of its members aiming to bring about widespread change in attitude towards the capabilities of learning Disabled and their ability to contribute to society’ (Blue Apple). It is through the production of a range of theatre, dance and film that the company aims ‘to challenge the prejudice and transform the lives of people with a learning Disability’ (Blue Apple). They state that ‘all activity is designed to build and sustain improved confidence and physical and mental wellbeing while, at the same time, producing exciting, engaging and inspiring art’ (Blue Apple). In relation to its line of research, Blue Apple continues to ‘influence national agendas through its live performance and films by tackling challenging issues head on [and] is leading a study to measure and demonstrate the impact of its work’ (Blue Apple).

The justification for the work’s existence is clear for Jane Jessop (in Lewis, 2012) who states that the:

> ‘lack of understanding in society about learning Disabilities can be eradicated as […] theatre is a fantastic way in which we can show people more about the subject […] In the end they see a real theatrical

> show and they forget they've been watching people with learning Disabilities. If we can go some way towards showcasing the abilities and personalities of these actors, and honestly look at them as professional actors, then we can help our audience members to do the same'.

Therefore, the work appears to be concerned with two overarching concerns, firstly its desire for Disabled theatre to be an inclusive practice (see 4.3.4, and 6.2.1) secondly for the audience attending the performance to be afforded and opportunity to transform their understanding regarding learning Disabilities. Transformation is also mentioned in relation to the participants of the work when suggesting 'the work results in great discipline, concentration, memory, the development of language and physical skills and the need to work collaboratively with a wide range of other people' (Blue Apple).

Although the company do not specifically make reference to their work being influenced by the purposes of applied theatre (which may be significant), it is clear from their aims and intentions that the elements of applied theatre (relevant to social change and transformation for both participant and audience) is evident within their projects. Their overarching manifesto also supports applied theatre's intentions to promote transformation and achieve inclusion and progression. They express a desire to 'change the way people see and understand learning Disability […] raise the ceiling of expectation for people with learning Disabilities [and] build and sustain improved confidence and physical and mental wellbeing' (Blue Apple). Such intentions can be clearly mapped onto the specific objectives, purposes and values of applied theatre work. Blue Apple undertake practice in order to touch lives, hope the participants and audience will extend their perspectives of Disability and imagine how it might be different, and are concerned with encouraging people to use the experience of theatre to move beyond what they already know (Nicholson, 2005). The company also fit the

criteria for participatory work as the participants are required to be actively involved with the projects and theatre productions. They identify the need for the work to represent Disabled people, who in turn are afforded the opportunity to engage with theatre in the role of actor. This is ultimately a company of actors with learning difficulties concerned entirely with interaction '– actor with actor, actor with text, actor with the audience. It is about trust, collaboration, and the development of bonds' (Thomas in Blue Apple).[27]

Of the current 24 productions created since 2005: including *'The Government Inspector'* (2011), *'The Snow Queen'* (2013), *'Arabian Nights'* (2014) and *'The Selfish Giant'* (2015), Shakespeare has provided the stimulus for some of their major, 'ground-breaking' productions including *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (2010), *Hamlet* (2012), and *Much Ado About Nothing* (2015).[28] Blue Apple's first performance of Shakespeare was the 2010 production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* at the Sam Wanamaker Playhouse at the Globe Theatre, London. The company performed with a cast of over 30 actors, many who had Disabilities.

In 2012 the company took part in the World Shakespeare Festival and tackled their second Shakespeare performance of *Hamlet*. The production was taken on tour to twelve main-stream theatres across the South of England and was performed to over 3,500 people. Clerke (in Blue Apple) explains the reasons for choosing *Hamlet* is because:

[27] Heidi Thomas is one of the UK's foremost dramatists and patron of Blue Apple Theatre Company. Her award-winning theatre work has been produced internationally, and performed by the Royal Shakespeare Company and on Broadway (Blue Apple).

[28] Hamlet also featured as part of the BBC3's hour long documentary 'Growing up Downs' which won the prestigious Creative Diversity Network Most Ground-Breaking Programme (Blue Apple).

> ‘With *Hamlet* Shakespeare was writing, ultimately, a play about someone trying to find their voice, their place in this world. And, with regard directly to the character of *Hamlet*, he does finally find it. But, fundamentally, it is too late. This is simply Blue Apple’s attempt to identify with these themes, and to claim these words, in our own particular way, as something that can speak to all of us. Before it is, indeed, ‘too late’. Too late to speak of people who are marginalised or disenfranchised because they don’t ‘fit in’. It is, undeniably, a cliché but, Hamlet’s ‘to be, or not to be’ still remains the fundamental question’.

Clerke’s reflections in some way reiterate the assumptions identified in the former sections of the thesis. The term ‘speak to us all’ appears to make reference to a universalising discourse, which is perhaps used by Blue Apple in to achieve their inclusive intentions.

Blue Apple’s latest encounter with Shakespeare was the 2015 version of *Much Ado about Nothing.* The production included working closely with a handful of 80 Jersey Islanders with Down’s syndrome and associated conditions to help them work independently and to their full potential in the community. ‘To achieve this play– if we have– has been down to an enormous commitment. Many hours. Much imagination. A lot of rehearsal, discussion and analysis. A lot of trust. And an enormous amount of belief’ (Clerke in Blue Apple).

The company are clear about their reasons for using Shakespeare. Jane Jessop (in Lewis, 2012) suggests that ‘this is the most famous [work] in the world. Shakespeare speaks to us all, and we should open those doors and allow everybody to taste what he has to say to us’. William Jessop states Shakespeare ‘is the greatest writer there's ever been. These stories are for everyone and have everything in them about humanity. Why shouldn't people with learning Disability tackle these texts?’ (in Emma,

2012)[29]. Their articulations profoundly echo the promotion of a universalising discourse and for this Disability project, the hope is that through universalisation 'we can bring recognition from the mainstream arts world for artists with learning Disabilities, who want to take part on stage but don't usually have a chance to do so' (Jessop in Lewis, 2012). Therefore, Blue Apple appear to be concerned with interacting with Shakespeare's work to present new visions of the plays and 'celebrate the talents of our actors through the greatest plays in the world' (Blue Apple), however they are not concerned with what it is about Shakespeare's work specifically that affords transformation to be captured. Transformation instead appears to be attained through simply being afforded the opportunity to perform the same work that other, non-Disabled actors have access to. The justification here is not straightforward and is tied to the inherent challenge associated with Disabled theatre's preoccupation with inclusion. This may suggest that other important necessities surrounding the work's exploration (questioning, interrogation, etc.) become secondary, if acknowledged at all. Although the work may have honourable intentions, the complexities of Disabled theatre's combination with the purposes of applied theatre, and the inherently political terrain in which Shakespeare's work has been previously used, means the work faces challenges in its justification.

Although the justification for Blue Apple's use of Shakespeare's work presents complexities, the company do present an awareness of the challenges inherent in work that firstly, engages with Shakespeare's work, his vernacular and ideas about humanity, and secondly attempts to engage people who present a range of different Disabilities. Blue Apple's manner of dealing with the challenge of understanding the

[29] William Jessop is an award-wining, self-shooting producer and director. He was responsible for the award winning documentary 'Growing up Downs', and has been involved with Blue Apple since his mother founded the company in 2005.

play *Hamlet* is to ‘adapt the original script to reflect the life experiences of the learning Disabled actors, sometimes meaning modifying the story to make it easier to understand’ (Blue Apple). It should be acknowledged that the changes to the text are made to make it more accessible and are for the participant’s benefits solely. In relation to *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, William Jessop (in Lewis, 2012) explains how the play was modernised to make it more accessible for the participants:

> ‘One of the actors always dreamed of being a pop star, so we wrote Hermia as a pop star, and we made the whole wedding of the king and queen a celebrity VIP wedding because everyone in the group was fascinated by celebrity and gossip. We made Demetrius a footballer because the actor playing him was obsessed with football! We kept it close to the actors and their wish fulfilment’.

The script is also often cut in length and adapted for greater relevance to the community. Lewis (2012) describes that ‘throughout the writing process the cast attended workshops led by William so that they could influence the script and greater appreciate the story’. Blue Apple usually keeps the original language of Shakespeare because:

> ‘The sound and the rhythm of the language really unlocked something within them. When you work like this with Shakespeare, you realise that it’s the sounds within the language that give it such emotional depth. That is what the actors respond to when reading the lines, that is what allows them to perform without necessarily understanding the nuances of the lines’ meanings’ (Lewis, 2012).

However, the inclusion of Shakespeare’s original language also brings its challenges. Emma (2012) highlights difficulties when explaining that:

> ‘Shakespeare's 16th century language was unfamiliar before the workshops started; many of the actors involved have Down's syndrome, which can make performing Shakespeare's words a bit of a challenge. The faces of people with Down's syndrome are shaped

> slightly differently and some have bigger tongues, so we worked with a voice coach to ensure that everyone could be heard and understood. For one of our actors, it is about learning to open her mouth wider, for another it is keeping her tongue straighter when she speaks'.

It is interesting to note that the Disability in some ways impedes the adaptation and performance of the work- that the challenges of the language are less to do with Shakespeare's writing and more to do with the Disability itself and its own, inherent complications. Other complications tackled by Blue Apple are found the cast faced challenges in their consideration of Hamlet and Ophelia's relationship, as 'sometimes people with Down's syndrome find it difficult to separate fiction from reality, so *Hamlet* has been blurring with their own real life, and with this comes difficulties with the emotions of the characters' (Lewis, 2012).

The complexities of the Disability (not necessarily the chosen text) cause a challenge and we see again the dangers of asking a member of a marginalised community to undertake character identification. The challenge here is not necessarily about what Shakespeare's work may be asking its participant's to face or the issues it requires them to question or address (for the community may not be able to interact with the text at this level); but rather that the challenge is tied to the complexities of what Disabled theatre is trying to achieve when asking a community with complex Disabilities to engage with a fiction that they cannot fully separate from real life. Blue Apple's reflections surrounding the use of Shakespeare's work therefore appear to move between the physical into the intellectual considerations that need to be kept in mind when engaging with the complex profiles of Blue Apple's participants.

Transformation, then, appears to be captured with the audience instead, who often arrive:

> ‘Not really knowing what to expect. Will they have to make any concessions? Will the show hang together? In the end they see a real theatrical show and they forget they’ve been watching people with learning Disabilities. If we can go some way towards showcasing the abilities and personalities of these actors, and honestly look at them as professional actors, then we can help our audience members to do the same’ (Lewis, 2012).

Therefore, Blue Apple foregrounds their desire for audience transformation in regards to the audience’s views and understandings of Disability. This is not an easy feat and links to the reception of Disabled theatre generally (see 6.2) and reiterates a similar challenge identified in the prison chapter, that of a public acceptability test and the importance of audience support for the continuation of this work.

The challenges associated with this work can be seen as threefold, there are challenges presented through working with a Disabled cast (the presentation of the language and the blurred boundaries between fact and fiction that are difficult for some participants to understand). There are challenges presented by the audience and their possible pre-conceived ideas about theatre and Disability and Shakespeare. Finally, there are challenges presented by the desire to achieve inclusion only, as this eliminates some of the theatrical necessities encompassed within applied theatre practice, suggesting that applied theatre and Disabled theatre are perhaps not the most complimentary of formats to combine. Furthermore, the idea of promoting inclusivity only results in a lack of opportunity for the participants to more deeply understand their Disability, which can limit this practice. However, it is acknowledged that there is a complicated balance to negotiate between the complex nature of the

Disability itself and how far this may restrict a participant from achieving the purposes of applied theatre, which will remain a challenge for the form to navigate.

Despite the challenges identified within the work, Blue Apple has drawn a lot of critical acclaim and their work continues to be award-wining. The reception of the work appears to be continuously positive. Numerous reviews commend the work for being 'Brilliantly told and very funny,' 'Pure class and totally engaging' and 'a wonderful and joyful show' Others state 'It always amazes me how I never see the learning Disability' (Blue Apple). The company is also commended in a reviewer's comments about *Much Ado About Nothing* when explaining that 'for the 150-strong audience who watched Blue Apple perform, it was an eye-opener to what anyone can achieve if they want to, regardless of their start in life' (Jersey, 2015).

Participants of the projects are also positive about the performances and their voices have a place in reflecting the overall success of the work. James Elsworth, who played Polonius and Laertes for Blue Apple offered feedback of his experience noting: 'I can be myself, people understand me' (Blue Apple). Tommy Jessop a 27 year old actor with Down's syndrome says 'it was his dream to play Hamlet. I like the 'to be or not to be' speech because it is the most famous speech in the world and because I get to act really big to the back of the audience. The sword fighting is really fun too' (Emma, 2012). Laurie Morris reflected that 'I think people out there in the world need to see that people are capable of doing Shakespeare, even with a learning Disability like we've got' (Payne, 2010). Polly Troup, a performer with Blue Apple reflects more generally about the holistic experience Blue Apple affords when stating:

> 'Oh, Blue Apple is definitely a caring group; everyone genuinely does look out for each other. The minute something's not right, someone will say – and it's nice that we all look out for each other. There's a lot to

> cope with here: the stairs, the space, 40 plus people. This place has been the safest place for me, ever since the beginning – I know that I can come here and there are people to talk to' (Blue Apple).

Therefore, the work is received with positivity and enthusiasm and the impact for the participants is clear from their reactions. Their work appears successful in achieving its intentions and ambitions, and there are continuously clear links between the work of Blue Apple and the intentions of inclusive and participatory practice. They are concerned with a desire to challenge expectations, promote confidence and develop greater understanding of learning Disabilities. The company use Shakespeare specifically as a tool for inclusivity, and theatre generally as a tool for transformation (not necessarily for their participants but certainly for their audiences). Their desire to promote inclusion within the practice of theatre generally is particularly commended, and as Lewis (2012) explains:

> 'taking part in theatre increases the quality of their actors' lives outside of the company. The most rewarding element of this work is seeing the actor's blossom as people and seeing the discipline of acting giving them real confidence to take out into their lives. They realise they can learn lines and perform, and, above all, when they stand on stage in front of members of society that they don't know, they can make them laugh with them, and at the end they can be applauded and cheered for what they've done. It creates a feeling of acceptance and vindication of themselves as people'.

Although their work does not holistically align to applied theatre's intentions this may be more to do with the complicated discourses when trying to merge applied theatre and Disability theatre in general terms. Blue Apple's work also never indicates a concern with interrogating Shakespeare's work or navigating the lessons found in Shakespeare's texts specifically, which could again be due to the compatibility of the Disability and the format of theatre. There would be an important research project to

undertake regarding the interrogation of whether these disparate forms of theatre are compatible.

Ultimately, Blue Apple's focus is to promote inclusion, which they appear to achieve. As Shakespeare is often advertised to be 'for all peoples, all communities and all cultures' (Irish, 2008, p.8) Blue Apple appear to be beneficiaries when using the universalising discourse Shakespeare's work is so often attached. Shakespeare's plays therefore appear to be the most sensible body of work for this company to explore to achieve the levels of inclusion they desire.

Summary

The chapters dedicated to Shakespeare with Disability explore a wide range of important considerations relevant to the work's challenges. These chapters have explored the general context of Disability theatre, its histories, origins and influences. It has suggested possible areas of challenge and explored the complexities bound up with work that seeks to combine the intentions of applied theatre work with the historical and recurring restrictions encompassed within Disability theatre. The thesis also acknowledges the importance for greater interrogation into Shakespeare's use within the Disabled community and its placement alongside other types of theatre.

The chapter provides an historical reading of Shakespeare's *Henry VI Part Two and Three,* and *Richard III* in relation to Disability. The provocations for practice deduced from these readings will be drawn upon in more specific detail in chapter eight.

The chapter finally assesses the Blue Apple Theatre Company as an example of work that currently exists in combining Shakespeare, Disability and applied theatre formats. The thesis here explores the aims, intentions and articulated benefits of the work, and

assesses how the general challenges of Disability theatre can filter into work with Shakespeare and the Disabled community specifically.

The chapter overall attempts to provide an exploration of Disabled Shakespeare and while the thesis is unable to cover every single example and aspect of this field; it does attempt to provide a comprehensive exploration of specific uses of Shakespeare's work with Disabled communities, highlighting some important findings in regards to this practice.

Chapter Seven: Therapeutic Shakespeare

> ***Hamlet***: To be, or not to be: that is the question:
> Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer
> The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune,
> Or to take arms against a sea of troubles,
> And by opposing end them? […]To die, to sleep;
> To sleep: perchance to dream: ay, there's the rub;
> For in that sleep of death what dreams may come
> When we have shuffled off this mortal coil,
> Must give us pause: there's the respect
> That makes calamity of so long life;
> For who would bear the whips and scorns of time,
> The oppressor's wrong, the proud man's contumely,
> The pangs of despised love, the law's delay,
> The insolence of office and the spurns
> That patient merit of the unworthy takes,
> When he himself might his quietus make
> With a bare bodkin? who would fardels bear,
> To grunt and sweat under a weary life,
> But that the dread of something after death,
> The undiscover'd country from whose bourn
> No traveller returns, puzzles the will
> And makes us rather bear those ills we have
> Than fly to others that we know not of?
> Thus conscience does make cowards of us all
>
> (Shakespeare, 1991, 3.1, p.886).

The following chapters address how and where Shakespeare's work is used within therapeutic environments. The chapter begins with an exploration of the history of theatre therapy generally, then moves into an interrogation of the challenges of theatre therapy specifically. Here the work addresses challenges in relation to the segregated ways of knowing a client, and the power dynamics between therapist and client. The chapter then addresses the use of Shakespeare's work in therapeutic environments specifically, where it currently exists and the articulated benefits of combining the two areas of practice. The chapter then explores the importance of interrogating

Shakespeare's plays in the intellectual tradition in which they were written, through a Renaissance reading of Shakespeare's *Hamlet* as a demonstrative text. Finally the chapter concludes with a case study analysis of the Combat Veteran Plays, as an example of a therapeutic community who use Shakespeare's work for the purposes of transformation. The work will explore how the company articulates the benefits of using Shakespeare's work to transform their participants, and analyses challenges that may ensue in the application of Shakespeare alongside a marginalised community.

The chapters ask:

- What challenges are posed in theatre attempting to access marginalised communities?
- What values and notions about humanity might Shakespeare depict/ promote through his work?
- What kind of critical attitudes, values and/or assumptions are bound up with this work and/or promoted through it?
- What challenges might theatre therapy face when combining Shakespeare with the intentions of applied theatre?

7.1 The history of theatre and therapy

Drama therapy, psychodrama and/or theatre therapy are all forms of therapy that aim to focus on the person and/or group in reducing the symptoms of mental illness. They all follow a social/wellness model of treatment (Sandahl & Auslander, 2009: Barnes &

Mercer, 2005).[30] The thesis importantly recognises that psychodrama, dramatherapy and theatre therapy are disparate terms. The terms are not synonymous but 'there are obvious similarities between the disciplines as they are all based in dramatic and theatrical processes' (Chesner, 1995, p.191). A lot of the methods of therapy between the forms overlap and a lot of practitioners take techniques from across the different practices (Walsh, 2012: Christey-Casson, 2011). Ultimately they all aim to effect some kind of change in individuals or groups, and 'they have something in common in relation to socially and politically engaged theatre' (Walsh, 2012, p.43). Therefore the terms are appropriately viewed as one and the same thing, the terms interchangeable but their slight differences acknowledged and retained.

Dramatic forms of therapy are 'solidly established as a viable alternative to other treatments, and it has developed into a systematic approach with established strategies and techniques' (Kellerman, 1992, p.11). The work draws on the desire to use action techniques such as 'role play, drama games, improvisation, puppetry, masks and theatrical performance, in the service of behaviour change and personal growth' (Kellerman, 1992, p.11). This is ultimately the use of drama as a therapeutic method and the work is articulated to assist forms of mental illness, helping to work through emotional problems (Boal, 2006: Christey-Casson, 2011: Walsh, 2012: Chesner, 1995: Winn, 1994: Kellerman, 1992).

[30] The social model of Disability draws on the idea that it is society that disables people, through designing everything to meet the needs of the majority of people who are not Disabled. The social model is more inclusive in approach. Pro-active thought is given to how Disabled people can participate in activities on an equal footing with non-Disabled people. The social model is generally the preferred model when thinking about Disability and has been adopted by most Disabled people's organisations (UOL, n.d).

At its most general, theatre therapy is often read as a form of theatre that 'can prompt us to reflect upon our own thoughts, feelings and behaviour in the presence of others, within a specific time frame' (Walsh, 2012, p.1). The work can be seen to 'make the hidden visible, the latent manifest, in laying bare the interior landscape of the mind and its fears and desires through a range of signifying practises' (Campbell & Kear, 2001, p.1). This documents the compatibility of the forms of drama and therapy in coming together to benefit and aid an individual and/or group. Chesner (1995, p.85) explains that:

> 'If we recognise that in each of us there are a number of sub-personalities or different facets, then our inner world can be thought of as a stage on which various conflicts, arguments and dialogues are carried out- there is interaction and there are inter-relationships. The dramatherapy process provides an opportunity for the individual to experiment with various possibilities, to re-experience and clarify perceptions of past events, aided by the drama therapist, who supplies this structure or the container for what takes place'.

Therefore, therapists and academics reflect that theatre therapy achieves its success 'by stepping into another person's shoes, increasing our sensitivity to others, and learning more about ourselves' (Walsh, 2012, p.1)

Historically, the roots of this type of theatre 'appear 45,000-35,000 years ago and tie to the beginnings of symbolic, metaphoric thought' (Lewis-Williams, 2002: Mithen, 1996: Pfieiffer, 1982). Research indicates that 'for thousands of years drama had been used in healing rituals and the form has its roots in religion, theatre, education, social action and mental health/therapy' (Lewis-Williams, 2002: Mithen, 1996: Pfieiffer, 1982). As a theatrical movement specifically, drama/theatre therapy emerged as a definite field of practice during the 17th and 18th centuries in some so-called lunatic asylums where theatre was used as part of treatment. Naples and Palmero in Italy had

theatres specially constructed in hospitals. By the 1920's Moreno had started spontaneous theatre work with adult actors, and by the 1930's Peter Slade had begun to use dance drama with pupils who had joined the Suicide Club at boarding school.[31] Phillips (1996, p.230) explains that in 1933:

> 'T. D. Noble, a psychiatrist at Sheppard-Pratt Hospital in Baltimore, USA, noticed that patients who had acted in the hospital plays were able to understand emotions better than other patients, could link their present emotional state and behaviour to their earlier trauma more easily, and were able to experiment with alternative modes of behaviour. He found drama was a vehicle for the discovery and expression of conscious and unconscious conflicts; that playing other characters helped patients release repressed emotions; that drama encouraged socialisation'.

From 1943 onwards Jones, 'a psychiatrist, began using scripted/improvised plays for therapeutic purposes at Mill Hill Emergency Hospital, U.K' (Phillips, 1996, p.230). By 1955 Jennings had started drama workshops with patients in a psychiatric hospital.[32] A lot of drama therapy in the UK has its roots in work developed by Jennings who 'defines drama therapy as the specific application of theatre structures and drama processes with a declared intention that it is therapy' (1992, p.11). In 1964 Linkvist founded the Sesame Institute, 'the first training course in drama and movement therapy for occupational therapists (held at a York Clinic, Guy's Hospital, London,

[31] Slade had an interest in and contribution to the philopsophy of child drama which came from his unhappy experiences as a child in a Sussex boarding School. He recongnised the value of cathartic drama and its potential for improving academic performace (Fleming, Bresier & O'Toole, 2014, p.250). Slade also discovered that enactments of drama 'helped young men not to kill themselves after all, but to find hope and try to believe life must be better afer school …. We could all see and feel the difference after such sessions and it became my life's work to explain' (Slade, 2000).

[32] Jennings is a dramatherapy and playtherapy pioneer in the UK and Europe and has established postgraduate practice in this area. She is a full/founder member of the British Association of Dramatherapists; state registered with the Health Professions Council, full member of the British Association of Play Therapists and Play Therapy UK a member of the National Association of Drama Therapy (USA). She has written over 30 books in the area of study (Phillips, 1996).

working with Slade and Wethered and influenced by Laban and Jung)' (Phillips, 1996, p.230).[33] In 1966 the Remedial Drama Group was founded by Jennings and Wiseman, and between 1966-85 Heathcote (influenced by Slade) 'ran drama groups in hospitals for people with mental illnesses in England, U.S.A., Australia, New Zealand and Norway; making videos of her work' (Phillips, 1996, p.230). By 1976 'the British Association for Dramatherapy was founded. Queen Margaret College, Edinburgh, ran the first undergraduate course in dramatherapy, the following year saw the first dramatherapy diploma start at Hertfordshire College of Art and Design' (Phillips, 1996, p.230), and the USA established the National Association for Drama Therapy. The British Psychodrama Association was developed in 1984.

Today, dramatherapy is recognised, through an act of Parliament, as a profession regulated through the Health Professions Council (HPC). Trained drama therapists have a code of ethics (The British Association of Dramatherapists: BADth) as well as being governed by other professional codes such as the UKCC code conduct (United Kingdom Coaching Certificate: 1992), the UKCP (United Kingdom Council for Psychotherapy) and the British Psychodrama Association (BPA) which represents psychodrama in the HIPS Section (Humanistic and Integrative Psychotherapy: 1993). In 1997 by act of Parliament dramatherapy became a state registered profession (in the Council for Professions Supplementary to Medicine (C.P.S.M) later to become the Health and Care Professionals Council (H.P.C.)) (Sesame Institute, n.d.).

[33] Marian 'Billy' Lindkvist is the founder of the Sesame Institute, drawing upon her experiences of being the mother of an autistic child, a career in advertising, and drama training to form the Sesame organisation. She retired in 1994 (Sesame Institute, n.d).

The history of the work, its origins and developments are therefore vast and extremely well-documented (Walsh, 2012: Christey-Casson, 2011: Boal, 2006: Chesner, 1995: Winn, 1994: Kellerman, 1992). Drama therapy represents a 'field that is now immensely flexible and used within a spectrum of mental health, forensic, education and training environments' (Chesner, 1995, p.5). The context of the work not only indicates its longevity but insinuates that this is a purposeful and well supported field of study, which continues to progress, develop and ultimately change lives (Walsh, 2012: Christey-Casson, 2011: Boal, 2006: Chesner, 1995: Winn, 1994: Kellerman, 1992).

Many companies working in the area of theatre and therapy, and currently still operating in the USA and the UK include, but are not limited to: Geese Theatre Company, Roundabout Dramatherapy, Encounter Theatre and Therapy, Olive Branch Arts, Behind the Scenes, Tangled Feet, London Playback Theatre.[34] Their work is successful as it embeds the ideals of drama therapy into its work allowing participants to engage with theatre in order to heal. The thesis recognizes that there is a vast scope of work surrounding theatre and therapy generally represented in the amount of companies currently focussed upon or embedding therapy in their work and some of these companies use Shakespeare within their projects.

7.2 The challenges of theatre therapy

There is a solid amount of supportive material to suggest why this field of work should exist and why it works (McLoughlin, 2012: Walsh, 2012: Hughes, 1993: Cox, 1992; See 4.3.2), however limitations within this field are equally as prevalent and the

[34] There are some companies here that mark a crossover between the work in therapy, Disability, and prison

importance of this chapter is founded in the discussions surrounding the, challenges and discourses associated with theatre therapy.

Inherently, there are a wide range of challenges that are faced by a practitioner hoping to combine drama/theatre with therapy. These challenges can limit the impacts of community-based projects that hope to achieve transformation and change. Such challenges are important to acknowledge and their impact can often be detrimental to the achievements of a drama therapy project. This chapter will consider: the segregated ways of knowing clients, and the power dynamics between therapist and client, whilst acknowledging that some of the challenges aforementioned in both the prison and Disability chapters are also relevant to the practice of theatre therapy.

7.2.1 Segregated ways of knowing clients

Early into the creation and practice of drama therapy academics stressed the importance for dramatists in the field to be qualified and skilled professionals ‘within such diverse fields as psychiatry, sociology, medicine, biology, anthropology, education, society, and group process’ (Weiner in Kellerman, 1992, p.45). Moreno (1983) also identified the importance for the practitioner to act as producer, counsellor, and analyst. Although it is commendable that those involved in establishing this area of practice were aware of the disparate areas of working, and how, when these areas came together, there was an ethical need that each disparate area was considered and appropriately attended, it is immediately clear that there are issues with this form of practice. The demands of this form on a practitioner are challenging; but there are also ethical concerns with work in which a practitioner may be qualified in the realms of drama but not therapy or vice versa. The fundamental implications here are that the therapist is versed in understanding their client in a psychotherapeutic manner and the

drama specialist is able to help in the creation of dramatic interpretations of the issues. When the practitioner is not qualified in either area of practice then the form is even more complicated. All implications result in a segregated interaction with the participants.

Although national standards have been established in relation to this practice of work, and qualifications specifically in drama therapy are available, there are examples of many companies who operate with little training in the realms of therapy (Pramann, 2005). This is bound to the concern that ‘novices or persons not suited to, or fully trained in, the approach may use the method irresponsibly and cause harm’ (Pramann, 2005). Regardless of how good intentioned the practitioners may be, without the correct skillset the project puts the community and the practitioner at risk, if neither is trained to deal with the outcome of the work, the issues it may provoke, or the resulting impacts it may capture.

Ultimately, if dramatherapy is a psychological therapy, then the process of the therapy and the relationship between therapist and patient is of prime importance. Therefore, there are endless complications if the therapist does not exist within the delivery of the drama therapy project, and a lot of the research indicates that it is often the case that a practitioner knows more about applications of drama than about the theories of psychotherapy (Kellerman, 1992, p.33). The segregation of those who practice the form is as complex and disparate as the form itself. The disparate terms appear to affect far-reaching aspects of what the form aims to capture and this can result in an often limited delivery of both areas of practice, which must be avoided if there is to be a successful continuation of this practice.

7.2.2 Power dynamics between therapist and client

Like the challenges identified in prison theatre, often a participant engaging with work of this nature does so because firstly, they do not feel like they can say no, and secondly they are compelled to do so because of the outcome promised through participation. Pressures of varying kinds 'can result in individuals feeling compelled to engage' (Pramann, 2005), with work that they may have otherwise avoided. The ethical issues here relate firstly to the role and supposed power of the therapist, and also consider aspects of the social pressures placed upon the patient. White & Epston (1990, p.29) explain that:

> 'if we accept that power and knowledge are inseparable … and if we accept we are simultaneously undergoing the effects of power and exercising power over others, then we will be unable to take a benign view of our own practices. Nor will we be able to simply assume that our practices are primarily determined by our motives, or that we can avoid all participation in the field of power/knowledge through an examination of such personal motives'.

Foucault calls this the disciplining of grief in *Madness and Civilisation* (1965). He is speaking about how notions of power position one form of knowledge (the therapist's) in ascendency over another (the patient's).

This challenge firstly suggests something about the role of the patient and their desire to acquire therapy. Their role is complicated. They are showing signs of difficulties with mental illness, their ability to make clear judgements may be compromised and they may also fear their current situation. Therefore, when the patient 'first enters the room, they are trying to work out what is expected of them and, generally speaking, to provide it. They are off balance and without even realising it, the practitioner can exploit this' (Totten, 2009, p.18). They are treated on the promise that they can be re-integrated

into current social conditions and ‘individuals under stress, for example, can often idealize any psychotherapist who gives them reason to believe that he or she can help them relieve their suffering’ (Kellerman, 1992, p.60). In this way, therapists are inevitably ‘engaged in a political activity’ (White & Epston 1992, p.29). Therefore therapists become a representation of a power structure. Totten (2009, p.18) explains how this structure is often:

> ‘a white male middle-class therapist [who] may sincerely believe that he claims no superiority of rank over a female working-class person of colour who is his client. But unless he recognises the social reality that he has far higher rank than her, and brings awareness to how this affects their experience of each other, the therapeutic relationship will be warped from the start; for him to ignore his power is itself a use of that power’.

That person, in the most extreme circumstances, might even be ‘conceived as narcissistic personalities with a very high emotional investment in themselves. They are often preoccupied with fantasies of unlimited success, power, or brilliance and with feelings of self-importance and grandiosity. (Kohut, 1978 in Kellerman, 1992, p.59). They will also predominantly be a person who has exchanged money for their service, therefore the ‘care is contractualised’ (Rose, 1995). This places a financial value on the therapeutic process (for both therapist and patient) and this ‘financial relation disguises a relation of inequality and power, if not exploitation’ (Rose, 1995). Therapy is inherently compromised as there will always be an ‘inherent power differential in psychotherapy’ (Zur, 2017, p.25). Therefore, the practice determines ‘whether a person can speak, what is sayable and by whom and whether and whose accounts are listened to’ (Belsey, 2001).

A further challenge is tied to the motivation for change and who exactly is suggesting it is needed and for what purpose. For if it is the therapist who makes this decision

then, as Boal (in Walsh, 2012, p.46) explains ‘therapy assumes that you have psychological problems and a need for treatment. Therapy also assumes that there is a therapist, a person who knows better than us’. Although the practice offers an obvious promise for change, it can simultaneously accommodate insights that ethically compromise the practice.

There are difficult challenges to navigate in relation to both the role of patient and therapist. Those undertaking and facilitating this work must not only be aware of how to negotiate the complexities of the disparate skills essential in the delivery of theatre therapy, but must also be aware of the difficult ethical and political challenges to which this work is bound.

The thesis here has explored the challenges in a form which is predominantly caught up with the ethical dilemmas inherent in any therapeutic endeavour. The challenges of the therapist and client, the ethical issues inherent in the work and the complications tied to disparate terms of practice have been explored. A practitioner is faced with a challenging task in attempting to achieve the fundamental ambition of an applied theatre project embedded within a therapeutic environment. It is has therefore been important to assess how far the inherent complications of the differing styles of theatre play a role in challenging the achievement of transformation, before Shakespeare’s application into the project has even been considered. The chapters represent contextual and analytical investigations into the general form and are intended not only as peripheral explorations around the practice, but important inquiries into the challenges bound to it.

7.3 The history of Shakespeare and therapy

The idea that performing Shakespeare can help in the treatment of those suffering mental illnesses has been gaining popularity for several decades with actors such as Mark Rylance and Ian McKellen endorsing and supporting projects of this nature (Morris, 2017). Currently there appears to be a vast amount documented on how Shakespeare is regarded as a prompter to therapeutic healing (See 4.3.2). There are a wide range of projects that use Shakespeare as a form of therapy and the work spans a period of approximately thirty years of activity in the field.

Cox (1992, p.2) documents that 'between 1989 and 1991 several of Shakespeare's tragedies were performed in the central hall of the Broadmoor Hospital's high security Psychiatric Hospital, Crowthorne in Berkshire, England'.[35] The Broadmoor Project is documented as originating as a modest enterprise developed in discussion between RSC actor, Mark Rylance, and consultant psychotherapist at Broadmoor, Murray Cox. The project with the RSC added the secure psychiatric hospital, Broadmoor, to the touring schedule of its 1989 production of *Hamlet.* Prompted by this initiative, a range of other activities followed including the adaptation of three more Shakespeare plays *Romeo and Juliet* (The Royal Shakespeare Company), *King Lear* (The National Theatre), and *Measure for Measure* (the Wilde Community Theatre Company), the delivery of several after-show talks and workshops and a book which recorded the project via the reflections of psychotherapists, actors, directors and patients (See 4.3.2). This work suggests the scope of Shakespeare's reach and highlights an

[35] Broadmoor Hospital is the best known of the three high-security psychiatric hospitals in England, the other two being Ashworth and Rampton (Cox, 1992, p.2).

established example of Shakespeare's use with therapy and within therapeutic settings.

The Madness Hotel (2012-2016) was part of a Brazilian tradition of alternative therapies based in performance, social empowerment, and interaction established by psychiatrist Vitor Pordeus to transform the suffering of his patients through creativity. Pordeus recognises that 'theatre provides stimulus for psychotic, schizophrenic and depressed patients, but questions whether it can actually improve their mental health' (Tavener, 2015). The Madness Hotel is based in the Nise da Silveira hospital in Rio de Janeiro:

> 'which has a long tradition of using art and culture to help with suffering. From 1946, the psychiatrist Nise da Silveira, a former student of Carl Jung, had patients paint and sculpt. Da Silveira was working during a brutal era of mental health treatment, and fought against practices such as lobotomy and electroshock therapy in favour of more humane methods of treatment' (Tavener, 2015).

Pordeus' performers are made up of a 20 member cast. They perform *Hamlet* at the psychiatric hospital in Rio's North Zone. Pordeus (in McLoughlin, 2012) documents the benefits of the project when explaining that:

> 'Released from their fixed roles as catatonic, belligerent or withdrawn patients, his actors are free to don different masks as characters from Shakespeare, and to live out a different reality for a few hours. In the safe, performative setting, new things can be said or tried out. As the circle moves round, it breaks at times for people to hug each other, for spats to be heard then ironed out, and for each player to start new chants which the others then follow'.

In order to ensure the success of the project Pordeus keeps photographs as records of the performance. He states:

> ‘the patients review these later on [and] they can see the progress they’ve made, but also better understand their own behaviour and interactions with others. He claims that patients who never spoke before joining the Madness Hotel and who now smile or spontaneously interact with others are proof of the healing power of theatre’ (McLoughlin, 2012).

Peripheral to the application and general running of the work McLoughlin (2012) evaluates the project as a sample of practice to academically interrogate. She states:

> ‘at the most basic level of affect, Pordeus’ performances provide a space in which patients can acknowledge each other. The Madness Hotel attempts to recover many things that are in danger of being lost, from the roots of Brazilian culture, to the idea of Shakespeare as populist street theatre instead of an art form for the elite. Most of all, it restores this idea of how vital we are to each other’s recovery’.

Although Pordeus’ work is not without contest (as other doctors believe the work agitates the patients and drugs should be used instead (alongside the project they do still receive conventional treatment and medication)), the Madness Hotel provides a long established example of the theatre therapy’s reach, taking place in a reputable and long serving therapeutic environment.

Jensen, M. (2014) “*You speak all your part at once, cues and all": Reading Shakespeare with Alzheimer's Disease* documents Shakespeare’s *Twelfth Night* alongside Alzheimer’s patients at the Stanford/VA Alzheimer’s Research Centre. He discusses his time with the patients ‘why they spoke of their reading with such enthusiasm, and concludes by asking whether literature might be used as a therapy to improve the lives of people with Alzheimer's disease’ (Jensen, 2014). Not all the patients in the group had Alzheimer's, some suffered from other dementias. The group was split into two: one group for patients and one for their caregivers. The patient group had different goals in different weeks ‘these included building self-esteem,

coping with frustration, improving communication, and helping patients accept their limitations and thrive within them' (Jensen, 2014). Jensen states that the only activity that seemed feasible was to have those who could still read, perform an abridged script of the play. He used a 90 minute annual radio version of the script and prepared topics for the group to discuss at the end of the reading. Jensen (2014) admits that Shakespeare is difficult at the best of times, but states that it:

> 'is rewarding, and Shakespeare is worth doing. His place as a pillar of modern culture was assumed. Nobody questioned Shakespeare's status or how he came to his cultural pre-eminence. These assumptions were exactly what made a Shakespeare project desirable'.

Jensen offers a gentle introduction to Shakespeare's uses with therapy and Alzheimer's and again documents the reach of Shakespeare's work.

Kelly Hunter is a British actress who works with the RSC. She developed a method now known as the Hunter Heartbeat Method with special schools near London. Established over 10 years ago, the programme helped Hunter notice that students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) responded particularly well to the method and so she began to produce one-hour therapy sessions with small groups of children with ASD. Her own company, Touchstone Shakespeare Company began in 2002 'to work with children (some autistic) who have little or no access to the arts, with the aim to release the communicative blocks within children and young people with Autism' (Hunter, 2013).

The work and method has also formed the basis of longitudinal research at Ohio State University from 2011-2015. MacLellan (n.d.) explains that there are:

> ‘two main principles which underpin her method: the rhythm of the iambic pentameter, which Shakespeare used and which imitates the da-dum of a human heartbeat, and an exploration of the mind’s eye, allowing children to explore imaginative worlds, which may otherwise be locked away’.

The ‘group play sensory games inspired by *The Tempest*. They act out throwing and catching a mask of “anger,” for example, and make other exaggerated facial expressions’ (MacLellan, n.d.) Hunter states that the reason behind her choice of *The Tempest* is ‘the play’s intense emotions, as personified by its characters. One of the play’s main antagonists is Caliban, who personifies anger, and who must be taught how to say his name and socialize in what becomes a comic scene in the therapy sessions. The actors take the role of Caliban and the children with ASD become his teachers (MacLellan, n.d.).

The success of the work can be found in published findings of psychologists Mehling, Tasse, & Root. Their publication *Research and Practice in Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities* (2017) suggests that in regards to the Hunter’s method the work does indeed help children with autism to:

> ‘sharpen their understanding of language and facial expressions. The participants, who were given baseline tests before the program began, were assessed again at the end of 10 weeks. The authors reported that the students showed significant improvement in standard tests conducted before and after the therapy for autism-related delays in social skills and communication, pragmatic language, and facial emotion recognition’ (AutismSpeaks, n.d.).

Dr Marc Tassé (clinical psychologist, director of the Ohio State University Wexner Medical Centre’s Nisonger Centre (2014)) is leading a study to evaluate the effectiveness of Hunter’s autism therapy and states that ‘It’s quite amazing to see how a Shakespeare play can be transformed into a therapeutic intervention that

encourages students to communicate' (Hunter, 2013). Hunter's work demonstrates a combination of Shakespeare with therapy and also highlights work which engages with both theory and practice.

The scope of the work is clear. Some of the work that falls into the category of Shakespeare and therapy may also be found under the title of Shakespeare and prison or Shakespeare and Disability, so the work is much more eclectic and all-encompassing than how it is presented here. The chapter attempts to offer isolated versions of Shakespeare in specific therapeutic environments and aims to present work/projects that have not been covered in previous chapters.

7.4 Shakespeare's therapy, therapeutic Shakespeare: a Renaissance reading of Shakespeare and therapy (through the play *Hamlet*)

Many an academic describes how Shakespeare's knowledge of 'both physical and mental illness enabled him to enlighten audiences about the soma and psyche of a character and their failure to work in harmony and there are many claims as to how Shakespeare provides important and surprising insights into medicine' (Cummings, 2003).

It is assumed that Shakespeare's access to medical insights derived from his relationship with his son in law, Doctor John Hall; although there is not a lot of evidence that suggests Hall treated the mentally ill (Morris, 2012). Tosh (2016) has also suggested that Shakespeare was influenced by:

> 'theories of 1st century Greek physician Galen (who determined the humours) and medical writers such as Thomas Bright in his *Treatise on Melancholy* (1586), all of which helped Shakespeare to understand the causes and treatment of melancholy and madness as his contemporaries understood the conditions'.

The plays are important in acting as an insight into the diagnosis and treatment of the mentally ill and society's reactions to their conditions as 'the afflictions in Shakespeare's plays help to educate modern audiences and historians about the health in Elizabethan and Jacobean England' (Cummings, 2003). It is important at this point to highlight the fact that the terms 'madness' and 'insanity' are also ascribed within Shakespeare's work. This presents vocabulary complementary of that commonly used in Renaissance England but at odds with terminology appropriate today. By providing a working definition of madness for Shakespeare's society the thesis aims to provide a better understanding of how an early modern audience would perceive and receive the theme of mental illness within the work, and how this theme may present important insights into the notion of mental health during the Renaissance period.

In relation to Shakespeare's interest in 'the genesis and process of Madness', Christey-Casson (2011, pp.18-22) states:

> 'many plays contain mad scenes; *King Lear, Macbeth, Othello, Midsummer Night's Dream, The Winter's Tale* […] The first clear depiction of madness in Shakespeare's work can be seen in *Titus Andronicus,* with limited depictions of post-traumatic stress syndrome. *Henry IV, Part Two,* draws upon a historical record of the King's mental illness and depicts depression-induced insomnia. Across Shakespeare's collection varying symptoms of mental illness can be identified from; anxiety in *Macbeth*. Paranoia in *Coriolanus, Othello,* and *Richard III,* psychopathy in *Richard III* and dementia in *King Lear. S*ome like Leontes (mad with jealousy) and Bottom (temporarily away with the fairies) recover their sanity through events; time and changes in circumstances being healing rather than a specific therapeutic intervention […] others tragically do not recover'.

Morris (2012) argues that *Hamlet* is an important play to analyse in reference to mental health as 'it contains Shakespeare's most fully-developed study of mental illness',

which may be due to the developments regarding mental health which became more firmly established:

> ‘at the end of the sixteenth, beginning of the seventeenth century, the Renaissance reached a creative height of introspection that gave the idea of mental illness and those who suffered from it a new respect that had been absent for hundreds of years […] the brief few decades in which mental illness was popularised could not have reached the absolute glorification of pathology without Shakespeare’s 1601 play *Hamlet*’ (Peckham, n.d., p.33).

The play asks the audience to pay attention to, and questions matters of; the mind that were being considered during the Elizabethan period. Madness throughout Renaissance drama generally reflects:

> ‘typical humoral or ‘ecstatic’ language, melancholic or love-sick characters, and visually in disruptions of conventional appearance used to display its metamorphosis. It takes place in dramatic development which passes through phases of contradiction, uncertainty and irrationality […] in tragedy, madness perpetuates the crisis to death […] in its most conventional forms, madness has always a negative potency, of signalling the failures of sovereignty and reason to guarantee meaning of the Renaissance world’ (Salkeld, 1993, p. 284).

All elements referenced here are represented in the play *Hamlet.* Of all the plays in which Shakespeare engages with mental health, *Hamlet* is the only text which presents issues with mental health from the beginning of the work. Characters in other work present symptoms as part of cause and effect throughout their play- a journey of dissent into madness, however Hamlet appears in an altered mental state, perhaps that of grief and depression, from the opening act (Minton, 2011).

The play asks the audience to pay attention to, and question matters of the mind that were being considered during the Elizabethan period. Reimer (2013, p.2) suggests that Renaissance Madness would appear to be:

> 'a *non-contiguous* condition characterized by *lack or loss of reasoning* capacity*, erratic behaviour,* possessing a dynamic relationship between *insanity and melancholy,* inspiring both *mirth and fear*, and falling victim to a human medical condition'.

His definition provides a base from which to read the character of Hamlet and his struggle with issues of mental health. It would also be appropriate to acknowledge the character of Ophelia who also offers depictions of madness and appears to possess clear characteristics of insanity. For the remit of this thesis, the chapter will focus on Hamlet only. This is a purposeful choice to allow the thesis to explore the differences between Hamlet's madness and Hamlet's antic-disposition. That 'there are wheels within wheels in this play, and they all spin around the blinding sun of political power' (Critchley & Webster, 2013) is important to acknowledge particularly in relation to levels of character identification, the challenges of a universalising discourse, and the way in which *Hamlet* may be 'put to use' in applied theatre settings. That Hamlet is an indecisive character and that the play pivots around a matter of political sovereignty, not personal animus is also important for any reading of this play. This chapter will consider Hamlet in relation to how or where he shows signs of: 1) erratic behaviour, 2) lack or loss of reasoning, 3) melancholy and insanity, and/or 4) mirth and fear, as a display of a Renaissance version of madness. It will also make reference to Renaissance reactions to madness, and the political underlying of the play. *Hamlet* is a play that unpicks a range of concepts relevant to the Renaissance audience. Madness, political sovereignty and emotional excess are all tied up in the play.

Escolme (2013, p.299) explains that ‘what the theatre might do, in staging a period when the question ‘how much emotion is too much?’ seemed to be an important cultural and political question’ and one that will remain important to question throughout this chapter.

Hamlet’s preoccupation with a desire to murder his step-father Claudius causes him to display a range of erratic behaviour. His actions throughout the play are what help indicate to the audience Hamlet’s descent into madness. He is viewed as a mentally unstable character that, in grief, is unable to handle the overriding emotions provoked by the death of his father. In these moments Hamlet demonstrates cruelty to Ophelia, broken sleep and bad dreams, a desire for secrecy, murder, and melancholy.

Melancholy is presented as a primary characteristic in Hamlet. Characters who interact with Hamlet ask ‘How is it that the clouds still hang on you?’ (Shakespeare, 1991, 1.2, p873) and ‘Good Hamlet, cast thy nighted colour off’ (Shakespeare, 1991, 1.2, p.873) an allusion to the grief Hamlet carries around in appearance (black attire) and characterisation. Hamlet also describes to Gertrude the manner of his mourning “But I have that within which passeth show– / These but the trappings and the suits of woe” (Shakespeare, 1991, 1.2, p.873). His grief is articulated as a deep, heavy depression. His most depressive episode appears in the “To be or not to be” speech. Conolly (1863) comments that the presentation of Hamlet’s illness:

> ‘might have been copied from the clinical notes of a student of mental disorders. We recognise all the phenomena of an attack of mental disorder consequent on a sudden and sorrowful shock; first the loss of all habitual interest in surrounding things; then, indifference to food, incapacity for customary and natural sleep’ (in Morris, 2012).

Hamlet’s first soliloquy articulates this presentation of mental disorder:

O, that this too too solid flesh would melt,
Thaw, and resolve itself into a dew,
Or that the Everlasting had not fixed
His canon ‘gainst self-slaughter!
Oh God, Oh God,
How weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable
Seem to me all the uses of this world!
Fie on ‘t, ah fie!
‘Tis an unweeded garden
That grows to seed.
Things rank and gross in nature
Possess it merely

(Shakespeare, 1991, 1.2, p.873).

Although Hamlet appears to be driven by his desire to ‘avenge his father’s death, he is simultaneously concerned that the ghost is a devil who will betray his soul, rather than the actual ghost of his father’ (Frye, 1984, p.12). Hamlet states:

The spirit that I have seen
May be the devil, and the devil hath power
T' assume a pleasing shape; yea, and perhaps,
Out of my weakness and my melancholy,
As he is very potent with such spirits,
Abuses me to damn me.
(Shakespeare, 1991, 2.2, p.885).

Shakespeare appears to be making reference to the pre-asylum years when madness was influenced by evil spirits, witchcraft and the devil and when exorcism was seen as a valid treatment to madness. Frye (1984, p.12) explains that ‘the popular conception of ‘treatment’ for mental illness drew on medieval understanding of madness as demonic possession in which the evil spirit possessing a victim had to be forced out with violence’. Exorcism was seen as a valid treatment and mental illness was articulated alongside devils, fiends, witches, deception, power; and recovery through the grace, Gospel, cross, and visions of Jesus Christ. Thus Hamlet, for a large majority

of the play remains confused as to what action he should put in place as he weighs the consequences of his actions in regards to the reliability of their influencing source. This confusion fuels his uncontrolled behaviour throughout the remainder of the play.

Those characters who witness Hamlet's demise provide the audience with a depth of observation regarding Hamlet's mental decline. Supporting characters throughout the play (Gertrude, Claudius, Polonius and Ophelia) all recognise and make observations or judgements about Hamlet's behaviour. Gertrude's private conversation with Claudius provides the audience with her theory in regards to Hamlet's temperament: 'I doubt it is no other but the main/His father's death and our o'erhasty marriage' (Shakespeare, 1991, 2.2, p. 880). She seems to refuse to believe it is anything worse. Ophelia recalls a Hamlet speaking of 'horrors' 'as if he had been loosed out of hell'. She states:

> My lord, as I was sewing in my closet,
> Lord Hamlet, with his doublet all unbraced;
> No hat upon his head, his stockings fouled,
> Ungartered, and down-gyvèd to his ankle,
> Pale as his shirt, his knees knocking each other,
> And with a look so piteous in purport
> As if he had been loosèd out of hell
> To speak of horrors—he comes before me.
> […]
> He took me by the wrist and held me hard.
> Then goes he to the length of all his arm,
> And, with his other hand thus o'er his brow,
> He falls to such perusal of my face
> As he would draw it. Long stayed he so.
> At last, a little shaking of mine arm,
> And thrice his head thus waving up and down,
> He raised a sigh so piteous and profound
> As it did seem to shatter all his bulk
> And end his being. That done, he lets me go,
> And, with his head over his shoulder turned,
> He seem'd to find his way without his eyes,
> For out o' doors he went without their helps
> And to the last bended their light on me

(Shakespeare, 1991, 2.2, p.879).

Although Hamlet is never kind to Ophelia, her death is one the clearest moments of his undoing. At her graveside Hamlet attacks her brother Laertes and the pair, in the grave of Ophelia, argues over who loved her best. Grief stricken and outraged, Hamlet's speech becomes nonsensical and extreme. He speaks of eating crocodiles and drinking eisel (vinegar). Onlookers comment upon the madness of its content in Act Five:

> ***Hamlet:*** I loved Ophelia: forty thousand brothers
> Could not, with all their quantity of love,
> Make up my sum. What wilt thou do for her?
> ***King Claudius:*** O, he is mad, Laertes.
> ***Queen Gertrude:*** For love of God, forbear him.
> ***Hamlet:*** 'Swounds, show me what thou'lt do:
> Woo't weep? woo't fight? woo't fast? woo't tear thyself?
> Woo't drink up eisel? eat a crocodile?
> I'll do't. Dost thou come here to whine?
> To outface me with leaping in her grave?
> Be buried quick with her, and so will I:
> And, if thou prate of mountains, let them throw
> Millions of acres on us, till our ground,
> Singeing his pate against the burning zone,
> Make Ossa like a wart! Nay, an thou'lt mouth,
> I'll rant as well as thou.
>
> (Shakespeare, 1991, 5.1, p.903).

The scene ends with Gertrude decrying her son's madness.

> ***Queen Gertrude:*** This is mere madness:
> And thus awhile the fit will work on him:
> Anon, as patient as the female dove,
> When that her golden couplets are disclosed,
> His silence will sit dropping
>
> (Shakespeare, 1991, 5.1, p.903).

The manner in which Hamlet's fellow characters do not understand madness seems to provide Hamlet free reign to blame it for his wrong-doings. Hamlet's apology to Laertes is a prime example of laying the blame of his offences on 'madness':

> ***Hamlet:*** 'What I have done,
> That might your nature, honor, and exception
> Roughly awake, I here proclaim was madness.
> Was 't Hamlet wronged Laertes? Never Hamlet.
> If Hamlet from himself be ta'en away,
> And when he's not himself does wrong Laertes,
> Then Hamlet does it not. Hamlet denies it.
> Who does it, then? His madness.
> If't be so, Hamlet is of the faction that is wronged.
> His madness is poor Hamlet's enemy.
>
> (Shakespeare, 1991, 5.2, p.906).

Although the speech may intend to be sincere the reasoning remains unsatisfactory. No-one questions the behaviour but instead allows it to be a valid pardon.

The small role of the gravedigger goes far in suggesting a culturally predisposed attitude towards mental health when the character 'tells Hamlet that his madness will go unnoticed in England, because there 'the men are as mad as he' (Shakespeare, 1991, 5.1, p. 902). This not only says something significant about the symptoms of mental health arising in Renaissance England (which could be a reason Shakespeare wanted to reflect on this in his play) but in fact, the manner in which Hamlet is unnoticed in the play actually seems to progress his dissent into madness.

For most of Shakespeare's contemporaries, madness was also a condition of darkness and fear. MacDonald (1981, p.141) writes that:

> 'the horrors of Bedlam can easily mislead us into believing that contemporaries normally treated the insane sadistically. Chains and fetters were reserved for the most violent and menacing madmen,

> people who terrified their families and neighbours. The manacled lunatic was not a sign of the cruelty and stupidity of the ordinary villagers; he was an emblem of their fear'.

Claudius and Gertrude depict fear in reaction to Hamlet's behaviour, they state:

> ***Claudius**:* I like him not, nor stands it safe with us
> To let his madness range. Therefore prepare you.
> I your commission will forthwith dispatch,
> And he to England shall along with you.
> The terms of our estate may not endure
> Hazard so dangerous as doth hourly grow
> Out of his lunacies.
>
> (Shakespeare, 1991, 3.3, p.891).

> ***Hamlet.*** No, by the rood, not so!
> You are the Queen, your husband's brother's wife,
> And (would it were not so!) you are my mother.
> ***Gertrude.*** Nay, then I'll set those to you that can speak.
> ***Hamlet.*** Come, come, and sit you down. You shall not budge;
> You go not till I set you up a glass
> Where you may see the inmost part of you.
> ***Gertrude.*** What wilt thou do? Thou wilt not murder me?
> Help, help, ho!
>
> (Shakespeare, 1991, 3.4, p.892).

The fears reflected in the characters of *Hamlet* are not only interesting depictions of our contemporaries, but are important in drawing attention to how madness may be less about *Hamlet's* psychology and more about the wider political conflict which is at the heart of the play 'as *Hamlet* enacts the incoherence of the Renaissance ideology of sovereignty' (Salkeld, 1993, p.93). Hamlet's state of indecision throughout the play is also a powerful sign of the political fears surrounding the conflicts between monochronastic powers. Hamlet projects a crisis of sovereignty; a dead father who 'warns and forebodes' and a step-father who 'plots and schemes' but neither rules.

Their indecisions are encapsulated in Hamlet's decent into madness (Salkeld, 1993). He is unable to address the two areas of conflicting doubt and cannot commit the act of regicide.

The play also hinges around the idea of Hamlet's emotional excess. For the Renaissance audience, passions (in the modern sense) would have been described as that which 'makes one less of an individual'. Hamlet is an individual barely in control 'of what makes man human: his Sovereign reason' (Escolme, 2013, p.xiv). From the outset Hamlet is in crisis between the two sovereign powers and the play depicts a political journey from order to disorder. Salkeld (1993, p.91) explains that metaphorically in the play 'the head has been severed from the nation. And sovereignty is dead […] a King without a body, as James well understood […] is indeed nothing'. Therefore, madness is no longer amusing or a cause to laugh at, but instead a metaphorical example of 'repressions during the 17th century for those who do not or will not conform to the power of an autocratic regime' (Salkeld, 1993, p.123). Madness has political significance. Hamlet's fellow character reactions are well placed in forcing forward the fear of a populace whose sovereignty and political power has suddenly fell into dispute. This culture's anxiety progresses to crisis point as bodies litter the stage at the plays conclusion. The seriousness with which these metaphors were depicted is 'indicative of the real authority which they were believed to exert' (Salkeld, 1993, p.9). The struggle of the state and an unpopular monarchy echoes throughout the play and fears throughout *Hamlet* are palpable. The characters in presenting fear in reaction to Hamlet's behaviour also depict a deeper cultural belief about the world, its ideological struggles, and its desire for universal order.

Hamlet's behaviour is often seen to shift between two conditions melancholy and insanity, mirth and fear, normal and erratic. This links back to Reimer's initial definition of Renaissance madness and helps to highlight Hamlet's condition as non-contiguous and often contradictory. Hamlet is a complicated character which makes his diagnoses from mad, insane to merely melancholic more difficult. This is made even more complicated when questioning whether Hamlet is in in fact feigning madness or as Minton (2011) states 'is he mad or mad in craft?' Madness in craft implies Hamlet is able to cleverly construct erratic behaviour in order to control and manipulate situations at his whim. Hamlet appears to put an intentional 'antic disposition' on (Cole, 2010: Cerasano, Bly & Hirschfeld, 2010: Cowen-Orlin & Johnson-Haddad, 2007: Young, 1994: Rosenberg, 1992: Dover-Wilson, 1951: Chauncy-Shackford, 1876). For example Hamlet displays pessimistic thoughts and negativity and admits to be suffering from melancholy when stating:

> How strange or odd some'er I bear myself
> (As I perchance hereafter shall think meet
> To put an antic disposition on)
>
> (Shakespeare, 1991, 1.5, p.878).

Although given the circumstances Hamlet's 'madness' could stem from an actual mental illness, most likely a depressive illness worsened by his father's death, Hamlet's self-awareness of his feelings are unusually acute. He recognises his strange behaviour and suggests that he can replicate the symptoms to his advantage as part of antic disposition. All of Hamlet's behaviour, then, teeters between real and fake, illusion and appearance, and it is difficult to judge whether Hamlet is erratic or considered. Through the character of Hamlet, Shakespeare plays the theme of

appearance versus reality and although Hamlet's behaviour initially appears uncontrolled, his interactions often show his ability to stay and remain focussed.

When Hamlet meets Polonius and calls him a 'fishmonger' the strangeness of his behaviour is particularly apparent. But Polonius too indicates a sense that the erratic behaviour is considered and for a cause when stating 'Though this be madness, yet there is method in`t' (Shakespeare, 1991, 2.2, p.882). Hamlet's actions indicate that he is more in control of his behaviour then he would have his fellow characters believe. Bynum & Neve (1986, p.392) argue that 'Shakespeare's seventeenth century audiences probably saw Hamlet as a bitter, sarcastic, cynical, and often witty malcontent, and if mad, mad rather comically, in the way that all lovers are a little mad'. For example, when interacting with Polonius, Hamlet asks 'Have you a daughter?' The question leads Polonius to believe that Hamlet has a form of love-sickness. According to Polonius, after being rejected by Ophelia, Hamlet:

> Fell into a sadness, then into a fast,
> Thence to a watch, thence into a weakness,
> Thence to a lightness, and, by this declension,
> Into the madness wherein now he raves
> And all we wail for
>
> (Shakespeare, 1991, 2.2, p.881).

Polonius is not being trivial in his suggestion that Hamlet was suffering from love-sickness, in the Middle-Ages it was classed as a real disease. Williams (2017) explains that:

> 'the physician Gerard of Berry wrote a commentary that the lovesick sufferer becomes fixated on an object of beauty and desire because of an imbalanced constitution. This fixation causes further coldness, which perpetuates melancholia. Since the condition of melancholic lovesickness was considered to be so deeply rooted, medical treatments did exist'.

Wack (1990) progresses the same argument when presenting findings discovered that indicated that:

> ‘The medical community gave serious thought to a fearsome, sometimes fatal disease then rampant among the aristocracy: love. The physicians believed that the physiological problem was an image of the loved one imprinted too deeply on the brain, which made the person obsessed’.

Therefore, Polonius’ suggestion may be comical to a modern day audience when he appears to misinterpret Hamlet’s melancholic symptoms for a love-sick mind, however, the audience, modern or otherwise do not laugh when his daughter Ophelia descends into madness and then commits suicide due to the same malady. The difference however is that Polonius in this exchange is guided to the conclusion that Hamlet is love-sick by Hamlet’s own endgame. Hamlet is intent on making sure Polonius and Claudius think he is mad so they are not threatened by his behaviour. This means Hamlet will have a better advantage to exact his revenge.

Hamlet’s behaviour towards his closest friends Rosencrantz and Guildenstern again shows erratic behaviour. In his exchanges with them he is presented in a bad mood, and is often extremely critical towards his friends. He questions their presence at Elsinore, and becomes preoccupied with testing their trust. When they declare they come for friendship, Hamlet asks:

> Were you not sent for?
> Is it your own inclining?
> Is it a free visitation?
> Come, come, deal justly with me.
> Come, come, nay speak
> [...]You were sent for, and there is
> a kind of confession in your looks, which your modesties have not
> craft enough to colour

(Shakespeare, 1991, 2.2, pp.882-883).

It is again apparent that Hamlet's behaviour is not without aim. He discloses information about Claudius' illegally obtained position, and alludes to the fact that Denmark is in hardship: 'Denmark's a prison' (Shakespeare, 1991, 2.2, p882). It is evident that Hamlet knows that anything he discloses will be relayed back to Gertrude and Claudius he even states: 'When he [Claudius] needs what you have gleaned, it is but squeezing you and, sponge, you shall be dry again' (Shakespeare, 1991, 4.2, p.895).

Hamlet's irrationality is a continuous presence around Polonius, Claudius, Gertrude, Rosencrantz, Guildenstern and Ophelia, but around Horatio, Marcellus and the players he appears calm and rational. His behaviour with the players is focused; he gives clear instruction as to how he wants the play to be delivered, with precise command over the acting style and the emotions it should provoke. The scene is often viewed as a way in which Hamlet's behaviour towards the players can be viewed in contrast with other characters in the play. The scene also shows the level of Hamlet's control in plotting the unfolding of Claudius' confession to the murder of his father. *The Mousetrap* (also known as *The Murder of Gonzago*) is used by Hamlet 'to catch the conscience of the king' (Shakespeare, 1991, 2.2, p. 882). Hamlet's allusion to 'mad in craft' is reiterated when making arrangements with Horatio for the play. He states 'I must be idle' (Shakespeare, 1991, 3.2, p. 889). He declares therefore his intent to be foolish. The ultimate explanation of behaviour is from Hamlet himself when he offers to his mother the explanation that: 'I essentially am not in madness/But mad in craft' (Shakespeare, 1991, 3.4, p.894) and perhaps the true intent and nature of his behaviour are revealed.

Hamlet is a tragedy ‘and Hamlet’s experience of mental illness, however profound, represents a lonely, internalised, and ultimately fatal experience and many may identify with the character’s thought processes and experiences’ (Peckham, 2012, p.34). The play is able to show clear differences between then and now as ‘mental illness [in *Hamlet*] contrasts sharply with the views of the mentally ill today’ (Peckham, 2012, p.34). The play is therefore essential to help ‘understand the social climate of the late Renaissance that allowed for these characters and their disturbed visions to flourish in popular imagination’ (Peckham, 2012, p.34).

This reading of *Hamlet* explores the historical complexities of Renaissance interactions with madness. The reading also articulated the fine line between real madness and crafted versions of madness and it is important to keep in mind that Shakespeare was demonstrating dramatic (rather than medical) skill and the fact remains that ‘there is no doubt that Shakespeare glorified insanity with *Hamlet’* (Peckham, 2012, p.34). Although there are aspects of the play that tell the audience something about a version of ‘madness’ or issues with mental health, the chapter warns of the danger that can arise when looking backward 400 years to Shakespeare’s texts with a modern concept of madness in the hope of learning something about modern clinical madness, ‘the broad criticism to which they are open is that in the effort to get inside the character’s mind and emotions, they ignore the historical conditions which enable and inform the representation of madness in the first place’ (Salkeld, 1994, p.18).

The findings of this chapter will be drawn upon more specifically in chapter eight, which brings together the provocations of practice that are informed by the play’s analysis.

7.5 The Combat Veteran Players: a case study

The Combat Veteran Players (CVP) is an award-winning Shakespearean theatre company of ex-Servicemen and women making professional level theatre whilst overcoming injury or transitional difficulty. Formed in 2011, the CVP is a company who have come together to overcome mental trauma, injury and related difficulties through performances of Shakespeare's work. They are predominantly concerned with individuals who have experienced or are showing symptoms of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) which is defined as the 'development of certain characteristic symptoms following a psychologically distressing event which is outside the range of normal human experience' (Winn, 1994, p14).

Jaclyn McLoughlin, the founder of CVP, moved to London in 2008 to get her master's degree at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Arts (RADA). In 2009, she researched the concepts of drama therapy and applied theatre, and began to explore the possibilities to combine Shakespeare and veterans with PTSD. McLoughlin (in Donnelly, 2015) explains that:

> 'It was a thought I had, basically, because I was thinking breath control of delivering the verse would sort of physically manifest itself, as far as calming a heart rate. After a little bit of time working in the commercial world, I revisited the idea. That's when I approached Combat Stress and met Walter Busuttil, Combat Stress's director of medical services'.

Following discussions with Combat Stress (The UK's leading Veteran's mental health charity) in 2009 Jaclyn McLoughlin created a rehabilitative, theatrical programme under the guidance of Dr. Walter Busuttil (Director of Medical Services for Combat Stress). The work was financially supported by Stoll (formerly the Sir Oswald Stoll Foundation). CVP now work in partnership with RSC through its Open Stages

programme and Shakespeare's Globe Theatre and the rehearsals take place at the Stoll complex in Fulham which exists to house and care for veterans of HM Armed Forces (CVP).

The aim of the company is to ‘highlight the difficulties faced by veterans when they leave the forces and try to fit back into civilian life’ (CVP). Therefore the work has a clear therapeutic and social mission. They aim to provide ‘a creative and expressive outlet for active duty and former-service personnel to come together for group skill-building, training, rehearsals, & high-level performance of Shakespearean texts in industry-regarded venues’ (CVP). Although the company recognise that progress has been slow and sometimes painful, the results are encouraging (CVP). The company understand that there is no quick fix for PTSD, but develop work that helps veterans through the difficulties that PTSD presents (CVP).

The company is clear about their links to applied theatre and over time the ‘CVP has become widely recognized as a model of the practice of Applied Theatre, shown to be highly effective in mental and emotional rehabilitation and overall well-being rehabilitation for Service members’ (CVP). The links to social and personal change are continuously evidenced throughout their work. The company help groups and individuals who have been isolated in the hope that drama can tackle social exclusion and change lives; while emphasizing the therapeutic and rehabilitative effects of that work (Nicholson, 2005). The company also fit the criteria and definition of participatory work as the veterans are required to be actively involved with the projects and productions, taking on all acting and performance roles within the plays explored.

The CVP have performed in a number of theatrical spaces to critical acclaim- ranging from Shakespeare's Globe Theatre to the RSC’s Swan Theatre in Stratford-Upon-

Avon. The first members of the CVP were introduced to Shakespeare in early 2011. They were initially to perform one book reading of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* however McLoughlin decided to create a full-scale production of the play. The debut was at the Old Vic Tunnels in early 2012. The CVP followed with a tour of *Henry V* in 2013, returning to the Old Vic Tunnels, and the RSC's Dell Stage in Stratford-on-Avon, and throughout the West End. *Hamlet* was performed at Shakespeare's Globe on London's Bankside in 2014, playing to an audience of over 500 and winning the Owle Schreame award for Innovation in Classical Theatre. They have also 'received a nomination for an award in excellence from the Royal Society of Public Health' (CVP). In 2015 the company presented their version of *Twelfth Night* at the Leicester Square Theatre. In 2016 CVP embraced the 400th Anniversary commemoration of Shakespeare's death and performed an extract of *Richard III* for an audience including H.R.H. Prince Charles on Shakespeare's Birthday on the site of Shakespeare's home.

Following the success of the CVP in the UK 'McLoughlin was invited to travel the US and expand the company there. In 2015 she visited the US for three months and opened a branch of the company in Washington, D.C.' (CVP). The actors in the UK at the time were into their fourth production *Twelfth Night*. The Washington branch debuted with a performance of *The Comedy of Errors* in 2016 at the Shakespeare Theatre Company's Forum Theatre in Washington, DC. The website outlines how:

> 'The cast of twelve active-duty and retired servicemen and women represented branches of the U.S. Army, Navy, Marines, and Air Force. The performance was supported by the USO of Metropolitan Washington-Baltimore on the Walter Reed Military Medical Centre Campus, as well as the Fort Belvoir Army installation, Intersections International, and the National Endowment for the Arts' (CVP).

The success of the CVP has also resulted in an additional outreach company, *Shakespeare's Soldiers* which was launched in 2015 and led by producer Amanda Faber working alongside director and writer Yorgo Lykouria of Soliloquy pictures. Faber 'has since launched a series of workshop programmes where Wounded Injured and Sick Service Personnel (WIS) go into schools to inspire and teach students' (CVP). The company direct the workshops under McLoughlin's instructions. Reactions to the company's work are particularly profound. The CVP website documents the work's impact when explaining that:

> 'Talim Arab a teacher at Oaklands School Bethnal Green said 'the skill and talent of the actors have again produced outstanding results. As a teacher witnessing my students work with the actors, utilize their advice and act upon it, then perform with confidence and fluency, is, in my opinion, the most authentic acting class a student can experience. The Company 'have given a performance of Great War poetry for students created by the Charity Never Such Innocence and they plan to deliver performances nationally which will run through the centenary of the First World War until 2018'.

CVP explain that the combination of theatre and PTSD is important because 'military combat and acting have a number of things in common: the camaraderie, the desire to do the best possible job, and the mutual support' (CVP). British Major General Richard Cripwell (in Foster, 2016) explains that the impact of the program has allowed:

> 'Veterans to reconnect with family members, work through post-traumatic stress disorder and depression, gain employment and confidence. What the arts do is about life. For many of them, they didn't have another option to who they were. And, what this does is give them options'.

Their justification for combining Shakespeare with PTSD is more complex but a common theme is that performing Shakespeare helps to break down patterns of anxiety and depression (CVP). CVP reflect that using Shakespeare within their work

‘helps to navigate through the painful places they've been ... to heal the wounds most of us can't see’ (CVP). Ultimately the work is about finding strategies to manage the nightmares, flash-backs, panic-attacks and all the other many symptoms of PTSD. The participants are said to find new purpose through Shakespeare and the manner in which this is achieved is threefold, McLoughlin works with Shakespearean text and its calming breath patterns that are assumed to combat stress, she looks to incorporate the structure of the military regimes that the men are familiar with, and she works with identity and change from soldier to civilian.

McLoughlin discusses how Shakespeare was chosen for the calming patterns of the breath- because of its therapeutic, calming, effect. She talks about the benefit of the calming of the heart rate through Shakespeare’s language. Voice Coach Victoria Williams suggests that the benefits of Shakespeare’s work can be found in the fact that the participants are asked to:

> ‘move away from flight/fight mode and they’re trained into relaxing into the speech. The actual act of speaking Shakespeare can be very therapeutic it’s the richness of the language and it’s the fact that it’s timeless as well and it’s about human emotions. Often as a voice coach you strip down the words to their bare sound the sounds themselves have a cry from the soul that modern language couldn’t touch. I think it’s great that these guys are doing Shakespeare’ (CVP).

The patterns of Shakespeare’s speech therefore appear to offer the veterans a form of catharsis. The problematic manner in which drama needs to be combined with therapy is present within the work and acknowledged by the leading practitioner. McLoughlin (in CVP) states that:

> ‘there’s a connection with stress and breathing; breathing being nature’s way of mending us, which is the foundation of the CVP. Looking at breath control in Shakespearean verse and its physical effect, but there was much more to it; confidence building, bonding,

> discovering skills. However I am a practitioner, not a clinician and theatre isn't a cure' (McLoughlin in CVP).

The benefits found in the content of the plays, however, are not discussed. It would be useful to hear about how the issues embedded within the work also hold a use for the participants, especially when performing plays such as *Hamlet* and asking the actors to take on these characters in performance. Otherwise it begs the question why Shakespeare's texts? Why a full version of the play? Why not just his sonnets or soliloquies? There appears to be a purpose to choosing his plays.

In an interview McLoughlin (in Norman, 2013) explains that the selection of plays chosen to explore were purposeful and progressive:

> 'we began with *A Midsummer Night's Dream* to soften them up. It was a kind of triple whammy: Shakespeare, theatre and fairies. The play breaks down all the walls. I thought if they could get past these three things they could do anything'.

Although it appears as though the true reason for choosing and/or continuing to use Shakespeare in this setting is actually that:

> 'the Veterans were the ones that didn't want to let it go. The excitement, appreciation, and pure joy of Shakespeare that they bring to the stage is unlike anything that I've ever known before in my career. They found such a love of Shakespeare; they were the ones who said, 'Well, you know, why can't we do more than an on-book reading? Why can't we do a performance? Why can't we go to a theatre?' So that was when I decided to take it up to the next level' (CVP).

McLoughlin (in Donnelly, 2015) attributes the military's high standards, work ethic, and team player mentality in refusing to dumb down her direction, she explains:

> ‘if anybody tells you, ‘Oh, it’s OK, you can hit this mark and not that one,’ to me, that’s patronization, and that’s not doing anybody any good, but we also find that balance of, it’s not life or death, and something will go wrong. I’ve seen this work; I know it works, that makes it less of an experiment when you’re able to say, ‘I’ve had these outcomes and this real impact. Let’s just do it here’.

McLoughlin also comments that ‘a lot of what I work with is identity, and there is a lot of lost identity that happens when you’re transitioning from combat to civilian’ (Allison & Hattenstone, 2014). She discusses the idea of Freud Trauma[36] and how this can break our protective shield. She states that some of these men are unable to ‘cognitively absorb the traumatic experience and if we follow this approach its worth exploring being able to touch emotions of others stories rather than our own’ (Allison & Hattenstone, 2014). Therefore in identifying similarities with the characters of Shakespeare’s work the men are able to in time find who they were and/or are, however the simultaneous dangers of character identification are important to reiterate.

Walter Busuttil, Medical director Combat Stress discusses how the work ultimately allows the participants to test themselves, in terms of their emotions and how they interact with people, ‘so we have the contrast of someone who is scared to go to Sainsbury’s at 11am on a Saturday morning, then that individual performing in front of 200 people. It won’t cure them but it certainly will help’ (Ledgard, 2013).

Stoll (2012) showcases the advantages of the work when stating:

> ‘in the context of the Combat Veteran Players who have been working with Shakespeare’s texts, the opportunity has provided them with a social reintegration into an environment with fellow Veterans; a renewed sense of achievement and accomplishment; an enhanced and re-discovered confidence; a target-driven focus for which to remain

[36] Psychological trauma is damage to the mind that can follow a severely distressing event.

> motivated and to also keep the mind occupied when it may otherwise wander (e.g. through line memorization); and a well-disguised exploration into personal identity and societal transition through projection onto characters within a canonical script'.

McLoughlin and CVP offer a lot of information which interrogates the therapeutic processes, strategies and techniques that are used within the project at a professional and therapeutically authenticated level and how they relate to therapeutic and psychologically approved procedures. It is clear that McLoughlin interrogates aspects of the work; but her use of Shakespeare is predominantly in line with therapeutic delivery and less concerned with the analytical and academic considerations of the plays.

It may be interesting to consider that the more robust contemplations regarding the benefits of Shakespeare's plays are in fact left to the participants to articulate, which may be a strategy by McLoughlin who affords space for the participants to provide first-hand accounts of the advantages of the work; rather than speaking on behalf of the participants. This perhaps suggests that the participants are better placed to offer connections between Shakespeare and their experiences of mental health and PTSD.

The company have worked hard to present information around the individuals participating in the programme. CVP offer a more robust and comprehensive accounts of each individual, where they have come from and are going to, what they suffer and why. This results in honest, first hand reflections in regards to the rewards of the work. The participants who discuss Shakespeare in line with PTSD provide vital reflections surrounding the work and its significance and the veterans present interesting accounts regarding the power of the Bard. Interestingly the participants of CVP

consider the significance of Shakespeare within this type of applied work and offer very clear opinions as to how Shakespeare *specifically* helps them to heal.

Androcles Scicluna originally from Malta, was a signalman in the Royal Signals for four years. Before he joined CVP he 'passed most days focused on survival, picking abandoned bottles and milk cartons out of trash cans and curling up in whatever public dry spot he could find to sleep at night' (Donnelly, 2015). He has suffered from depression ('in hibernation') for 20 years and left the armed forces for medical reasons. Scicluna explains that 'being used to army life, and suddenly coming to civilian life, it wasn't easy for me. It wasn't any good life, I mean, I had already experienced death … I just stayed on my own, kind of in hibernation' (in Donnelly, 2015). This changed when 'in 2011 he was approached by a government affairs officer who pointed him towards the CVP. Four years later, Scicluna has appeared in three performances in London and holds down two part-time jobs, one as a tour guide and another as a caretaker' (Donnelly, 2015). Of the experience of working with CVP and Shakespeare he reflects:

> 'People like me sometimes are depressed over our present situation and suddenly, when we jump into a Shakespearean character, that's like leaving our own problems away and getting into another person. Once we finish the acting, being the character, and get back into our own, somehow the kind of depression has moved out. You get yourself into someone else's body and you forget yourself, and when you return you are contented and well satisfied. I can do lots of good things and I am appreciated. This is the best part of the whole thing. The subject has given us a common element to discuss between each other' (Donnelly, 2015).

He calls CVP a 'band of brothers', and thanks McLoughlin for the 'better state' he is in. Group comradeship he concludes is:

> ‘the most important thing is the meeting. Getting all of us together, all ex-servicemen and women knowing each other, doing physical exercises, learning to project our voice, but also, you know, the kind of friendship we’ve had with one another’ (Donnelly, 2015).

Scicluna’s assessment of the work does not necessarily indicate the power of Shakespeare but it certainly alludes to the importance of inclusion- something which is similarly suggested as powerful in the work found in Shakespeare’s use amongst Disabled communities.

Shaun Johnson was part of the Royal artillery until a crush injury meant he had to leave. He had wanted to do 22 years and was disappointed when he came out with an injury. Shaun ‘saw action in Northern Ireland at the height of the troubles of the 1980s’ (Dilley, 2015). In reaction to his declining mental health, Johnson’s reflects that:

> ‘I was starting to suffer and worry about now and some things I saw as a young soldier were starting to bite back in my mind. I started to rapidly decline. Very, very quickly. I started to want to destroy myself. The inevitability of it is I was sitting in the car at 3am, unconscious, with a pipe in it’ (CVP).

The Shakespeare programme is helping him with his PTSD and hyper-vigilance. Johnson generally felt that the programme was beneficial in making him feel like he was back in the armed forces, ‘with the guys and the camaraderie, engaged in something that was rewarding for my condition if you will’ (Taylor, 2017). He documents the importance of theatre when explaining that:

> ‘when you're introduced to something like theatre and particularly with Shakespeare... you don't have time to remember or think or meditate on what's troubling you because you've got lines to learn and scenes to get on with, and all of sudden your life is filled with something which is quite exciting’ (in Dilley, 2015).

He also acknowledges that people may question why Veterans? Why therapy? Why Shakespeare? To which he replies:

> ‘Why not? It is making a difference in the lives of the people who are participating in it and it hopes to change other’s lives which will therefore have been worth it [he concludes] It helps you to under PTSD, and the stigma. You don’t have to suffer in silence. It teaches you not be embarrassed’ (CVP).

Although Johnson’s reaction does not specifically confront the uses of Shakespeare, he still voices something specific about the practice of the theatrical form and reiterates some of the considerations regarding inclusivity initially introduced in the theatre and Disability chapter (see 6.2.2).

Johnson most importantly interrogates the Shakespearean roles he is asked to perform, and it is interesting to hear the chilling comparisons between Shaun’s own life and his character Hamlet. Johnson explains that:

> ‘playing Hamlet was dark and often I struggled to play him but it taught me a lot about myself and helped me to cope with my mental health condition. When I do his speech to be or not to be, when I read that through, that knocked me right back because he was talking, you know, about going through the motions of killing himself. Been there, and I immediately thought good lord- that’s going to be quite a challenge’ (in Ledgard, 2013).

His articulation is important, it not only references a dramatic process an actor may need to undertake in order to understand their character more thoroughly, but it also documents a process of a person experiencing significant mental pain in their personal life being asked to explore and in some manner recreate some of the more torturous moments of their life for the purposes of theatre. The dangers of which are also discussed in relation to prison theatre (see 1.2 and 5.6). At one point Johnson breaks

down in rehearsal, in reference to Hamlet's speech this too, too solid flesh 'I just wanted to avoid it all the time… and I dug really deep in rehearsals, to go back to what it felt like to lose myself, to become emotional. Going there is helping me face demons from the past and educating me that it's alright to let the emotions out' (Foster, 2016). It remains questionable that a person with a condition of this nature is not only asked to play out his demons in the rehearsal space but also on the stage, and in the same manner that method acting has its limitations, the process of combining participants who suffer with mental health with Shakespeare's complex characters is also problematic. It is interesting to hear the brevity at which Johnson discusses a very different character Malvolio 'a fantastic person to play. I enjoy being him although he is completely different to the real me. It's such fun exploring his mannerisms and injecting his personality into my own to create a character that is at times often hilarious' (CVP). There may be something significant to say about work that allows you to escape rather than to continuously confront.

Ian Ford (in Dilley, 2015) talks about his history as an 'acting sergeant in the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers' and discusses with *Inside Out* (2015) how he locked himself away from the 'world for a long, long time, I didn't want to see anyone and this was the first time being in a room with a bunch of squaddies again, and the joviality, believe it or not has been the most therapeutic' (Inside Out, 2015). Ford's 'problems arose from his tours of duty in Bosnia in 1995' (Dilley, 2015), his experiences were part of the ethnic cleansing and his group were the first to the first mass grave. He states that:

> 'eight months later when I came back I was crying over a pint in a bar. Since leaving the army in 2006 I have found it hard to share my emotions. I have pushed everyone away. I now have no family and no friends. But put me on the stage as a frightened 12-year-old boy and I

> can find the emotion. It's quite liberating. Some people have noticed a big change in my anger and my attitude. I've got my self-respect back' (Inside Out, 2015).

Ford continues to reflect upon how the program has helped with his reintegration back into civilian life and the therapeutic benefits undertaking the work has had upon his life. He states:

> 'I was a loner and recluse. I literally would just be on my own. I was a social creature. The life and soul of the party, and I don't know how PTSD takes hold, or has hold, but it does, but this has been the biggest help since leaving the army. I should have been helped 20 years ago. I couldn't tell you what it was; I couldn't see it was a psychological problem. I don't trust people. Or myself. It's like a fight to go out there. Now because of the drama I am feeling more comfortable (Inside Out, 2015).

Although Ford acknowledges that he is not a big reader and would not naturally know what Shakespeare was trying to say to the actors he significantly identifies the purpose of exploring a character from a '3rd play point of view and doing things with other people's emotions without having to deal with your own is actually quite liberating and I think that in the long run I will be able to integrate them back into my own personality' (Inside Out, 2015) however he does warn about the importance of the selection of the play text and states that:

> '*Henry V* is a dangerous choice, if only because Shakespeare got it so right. The early rehearsals were fraught as they dredged their memories of combat. Although sword in hand comes natural the hardest thing about the play is to confront the deep sad emotion- this has been suppressed before' (Inside Out, 2015).

Unlike Johnson, Ford is very specific about the dangers and complications inherent in the work and his reflections are significantly aligned to the concerns of this thesis.

David Wilkins 'was a Private in the Cheshire Regiment who served in Belfast during The Troubles' (in Dilley, 2015). He states: 'I was in a local village and actually thought and believed people were spying on me, that there were men on the roof with a sniper rifle and I actually believed this. Then I realized this was just figment of my imagination (Ledgard, 2013). David Wilkins is the group's musician who has composed for the productions. In an interview with *The Stage* (2013) Norman (2013) asks:

> 'Pouncing about as fairies in Midsummer Night's Dream is one thing, playing soldiers in battle in Henry V is quite another. Isn't that rather close to home? Wilkins responds "there are areas we can't or don't want to go in to but we can use some of it in the performance''.

Wilkins draws attention to the difficulties that character identification can present to the participants of the CVP. He offers an awareness of the limits this work can ask participants to get close to, but simultaneously suggests that similarities in the text afford justification in regards to the choice of using Shakespeare. Wilkins offers a common-sense response when he explains that:

> 'Soldiers are soldiers. The rank structure, the drunken soldiers, it's all the same. I'd seen it in Bosnia. The captain in tears, scared. I'm proud to be English. There is nothing different about us now to the guys in *Henry V*. Shakespeare shows that soldiers aren't just killing machines; they have emotions which is why we are all so fucked up. I want us to show the audience that soldiers aren't all bad. I hope we can give that to the audience' (Norman, 2013).

These are only a few of the men who reflect on the work and its benefits, many others including Cassidy Little, Andy McCabe, Julian Sayers, Alan Smith and Neil Rostron all actively promote the work on the radio, in newspapers and in interviews on TV.[37] They

[37] Little was a serving member of 42 Commando. The former Royal Marine was severely injured by an improvised explosive device in Afghanistan. He had his right leg amputated below the knee, his left retina partially detached and various bones shattered (Dilley, 2015).

clearly believe it is not only important to experience the work, but also to promote it to audiences so they too can understand the importance of understanding PTSD and in this case understand PTSD through Shakespeare.

What is overtly clear about the CVP's work is that there is a common interest that 'they somehow all pull through. It is quite evident that, difficult as it is for some of them, they all want to be there, to be part of the process. And many are surprisingly candid about their condition' (Norman, 2013). It remains important to question whether the work has being successfully transformative to which one veteran states the project has helped 'change lives' (CVP). Regardless of the therapeutic definition of transformation or change (which is not significantly explored or outlined as an intention of the work as instead development, acceptance and growth appear as the more dominant focus for the project) the work appears successful in its engagement with the veterans and it is clear from the participant's and practitioner's interrogation of the work that theatre, therapy and Shakespeare are helpful tools in the fight against PTSD: the stigma from the outside and the suffering from the inside.

CVP appear successful in motivating and capturing the imaginations of the players in their theatrical and real lives; but there remain implicit challenges to the work in relation to the fragility of the participants and the combination of Shakespeare with therapy and a theatrical environment. Norman (2013) states that in watching the work:

> 'the camaraderie is there but it remains fragile. In the couple of days I spent watching rehearsals there were some difficulties with absenteeism, a tantrum or two and at least one member who admitted he had spent the previous evening self-medicating with alcohol instead of learning lines'.

Wilkins offers a more personal account of the challenges when he states that ‘I turned into a real knob head at one time. I can get very agitated – I’m on medication for that’ (Norman, 2013). Therefore the presence of the challenges presented by the varying mental health issues and conditions are continuously interlaced throughout the work, which suggests something significant about the challenges found in attempting to combine the different practices of theatre and therapy.

CVP as a case study provides a clear example of Shakespeare’s use within therapeutic environments. Their work appears successful in achieving its intentions and ambitions, and there are continuously clear links between the purposes of theatre therapy and the intentions of participatory work. The practitioners and the participants do explore some of Shakespeare’s uses, intentions, impacts and purposes; but it would be beneficial if there were greater references to the plays themselves, and more significantly how CVP are navigating the themes and issues of the texts. Although this is briefly touched upon and at times questioned by the participants, the practitioners appear to be more concerned with the rhythm and pattern of the speech as a more relevant exercise for therapeutic healing. Although it is evident too that the practitioners have thought significantly about what it means to combine theatre and therapy, the work is limited in its lack of interrogation into how Shakespearean plays selected may promote certain ideals about mental health different to those held important today. More needs to be said about the significance of selecting the play texts, how they might align to the veteran’s experiences and how the content of the work might promote opportunities for transformation. However, CVP offer a solid example, not only of Shakespeare’s use alongside therapy, but of therapeutic encounters through theatre.

Summary

The work across the chapters dedicated to Shakespeare with therapy explores a wide range of important considerations relevant to theatre therapy's benefits and challenges. This thesis has explored the general context of the work, its histories, origins and influences. It has suggested possible areas of challenge and explored the complexities bound up with work that seeks to combine the intentions of applied theatre with the techniques and strategies of therapy and drama therapy. The thesis also acknowledges the current level of interrogation of this field of work and its placement amongst other types of theatre.

The chapter provides an historical reading of Shakespeare's *Hamlet* in relation to therapy and mental health. The provocations for practice deduced from these readings will be drawn upon in more specific detail in chapter eight.

The chapter finally assesses The Combat Veteran Players as an example of work that currently exists in combining Shakespeare, therapy and applied theatre.

The chapter overall attempts to provide an exploration of Shakespeare and therapy and whilst the thesis is unable to cover every aspect of this field, it does attempt to provide a comprehensive exploration of specific uses of Shakespeare's work within therapeutic settings and for purposes of therapeutic healing and transformation.

Chapter Eight: Provocations for Practice

The purpose of this chapter is to bring together the provocations of practice that are deduced as a result of applying new historicism and Brecht's historicisation to the readings of a range of Shakespeare's plays. The intention of the thesis was never to offer a toolkit for learning, or to suggest that the findings of the chapters dealing with Renaissance readings of the work were to be applied by all practitioners that use Shakespeare's work for transformative purposes, in a manner that would suggest the findings here are recommendations for practice. The findings do not suggest a creative application that has to be replicated; but rather offers a range of provocations for practice in reaction to applied theatre practitioners who may want to use Shakespeare's work for transformative purposes.

The thesis began with an interest in three main propositions:

1) Applied theatre is bound to inherent challenges.
2) A universalising discourse is often relied upon when using Shakespeare's plays to generate possibilities for transformation which can often mean that assumptive and taken-for-granted beliefs about Shakespeare's plays override the consideration of the political and cultural values embedded in Shakespeare's own theatre.

3) The use of Shakespeare's work amidst marginalised communities means that potentially vulnerable communities of people are asked to engage with complex and complicated characters for transformative purposes.

The three main propositions also represented challenges to the practice of using Shakespeare's work amidst marginalised communities. Therefore the thesis was

interested in finding a method that would allow the two latter propositions to be subverted, offering provocations to consider when embedding Shakespeare's work alongside marginalised (and potentially vulnerable) communities. This chapter seeks to ask:

- What are the main provocations of practice informed by the Renaissance readings of Shakespeare's plays?
- What can new historicism and Brecht's historicisation and verfremdungseffekt contribute to explorations of Shakespeare's plays in an applied theatre setting?

As research has implied there is often a universalising discourse employed when using Shakespeare's texts, which provides an implied validity in the use of his plays (see 1.2.1). Due to the supposed 'versions of humanity that will always remain relevant'; Shakespeare's work is often at risk of being taken at 'face-value' as a 'blue-print' for learning about, and transforming oneself. It is suggested that participants are afforded an 'unreflective affirmation' of a range of ideals found in the play's universalising powers, through the applied universalising discourse. Therefore the thesis was concerned with using new historicism to help subvert the use of a universalising discourse, challenging the concepts of universal truth and rationality.

Brecht's historicisation and verfremdungseffekt allow the historical readings of Shakespeare's work to be more coherent and concentrated, where the participant can be safely distanced from the implications of the issue. By viewing Shakespeare's work as being distanced from the present, the lessons of the plays can be more effectively understood as the participant is no longer bound to making parallels to their own lives. In concentrating on a fictional past the participants can identify opportunities for

change from a safe distance, while still understanding the implications the opportunities for change may hold today.

Through applying new historicism and Brecht's historicisation it becomes clear that Shakespeare's plays are not universal, but still remain important to explore as they can help to indicate where change has, and can take place. Through literary and analytical tools of this nature, the mind can remain concentrated to view the material in its own context, to explore important social differences, and be placed at a safe distance from the issues of the play, to understand the area of change. The differences between then and now are key as they help promote important lessons and avoid copying surface details of the world as lived experiences, which the universalising discourse often promotes. The work in this way can help to acknowledge that people, cultures and societies are different, and this is where true learning can be captured.

Through undertaking a Renaissance reading of a range of Shakespeare's plays, the thesis aimed to demonstrate how, if the mind is concentrated on the past and can recognise the differences and *not* similarities between then and now; opportunities for change and transformation can be more appropriately identified and defined. Reiterating Shakespeare's plays as examples of fiction can help participants understand the implications of their situations safely; this in turn may lead to opportunities to achieve transformation. The Renaissance readings also highlighted the importance of the text's historical context in suggesting ways in which Shakespeare's plays are not universal, and are often a clear reflection of the time in which they were created. The Renaissance readings demonstrate how the notion of Shakespeare's plays offering participants unparalleled insights into universal truths is

questionable, but provides an alternative analytical approach from which participants are able to engage with Shakespeare's plays and the lessons they may hold.

The Renaissance readings of a range of Shakespeare's plays, offer important demonstrations of how lessons can remain universalised if methods such as historicisation and new historicism are not applied to the interrogations of the work. Through plays that deal with therapy, Disability and prison the thesis is able to demonstrate how these methods can be applied. This chapter offers provocations for practice informed through undertaking a Renaissance reading of Shakespeare's play and their content and context. The chapter also highlights how a Renaissance reading can provide participants a safe distance from the work so that aspects of change and transformation can be focussed upon and more clearly identified.

The thesis therefore suggests that there are three main provocations for practice that suggests benefit when:

1) Using new historicism, historicisation and verfremdungseffekt in order afford the participants a safe distance from the issues of the work, when exploring the opportunities transformation in Shakespeare's work.
2) Using new historicism, historicisation and verfremdungseffekt to subvert the universalising discourse often attached to Shakespeare's plays, helping to avoid generalisations, assumptions and taken-for-granted beliefs about the work.
3) Using new historicism, historicisation and verfremdungseffekt to challenge the concept of universal truth to demonstrate where differences and not similarities exist.

8.1. Provocation one: offering participants a safe distance from the work when exploring opportunities for transformation in Shakespeare's work

The promotion of character identification can often combine the use of a universalising discourse with the promotion of value found in Shakespeare's works, to achieve transformation. This promotes a challenge whereby complex and complicated profiles of characters are explored by vulnerable communities of people. They may be asked to relive painful experiences, and identify with universalised ideals as examples of unreflective affirmations. By linking Shakespeare's works with applied theatre's vision of change and transformation, the participants may be being asked to undertake a process of character analysis which allows them to reflect upon human experiences that existed and made sense over 400 years ago. There are also complications tied to defining Shakespeare's uses by means of moral vocabulary. In identifying with and exploring only the parallels to Shakespeare's characters the participants may be required to identify with a very complex, and potentially morally compromised versions of human, making it difficult to overcome the 'conflict between what might be called the moral purpose of the action and the feelings cultivated by the play' (Ko, 2014). It is also questionable that the reason the individual is being asked to relive the situation is because of the assumed and taken for granted belief that Shakespeare is a universalising force and has something to teach 'all people'. If participants are asked to undertake character identification as an example of universalism, this evades any level of diversity and implies that these characters are exemplars to human nature, rather than fictitious figures that may say something about a different period of time.

The first provocation of practice suggests that by subverting the universalising discourse that often operates when applying Shakespeare's work in a number of

settings, and focussing upon the differences of the past, the participants can be safely distanced from the issues in order to find opportunities to achieve transformation and change. This provocation of practice is perhaps the most important to consider, as applied theatre can deal with extremely vulnerable communities of people, and in remaining distanced from the issues, the participants can be safely removed from difficult or painful memories and/or experiences. Brecht explains that things in the present can often be too close to observe objectively, therefore historical readings of the work offer the participant an important distance from the issue. In separating the then and now, participants' minds can be concentrated, making them better placed to be able to see the extent of change that has and still needs to take place.

The Renaissance readings of *Macbeth* demonstrated how the depictions of Lady Macbeth's character and behaviour are complex. One must use the lessons of this play cautiously and tread carefully when exploring her character, particularly if she is used as an example of depicting 'universal' behaviours. It would be ill-advised to suggest that she is a universal character who teaches universal truths about behaviours and attitudes. It would be dangerous even to suggest that her examples of human behaviour are 'of all time'. Taking into consideration the ideas of maternal agency, patrilineal identity and lineage, and infanticide as presented in the play *Macbeth*, the extent of Lady Macbeth's crimes can be understood, and they do not appear universal. It is clear that an historical reading of the work is needed when exploring this character as the seriousness of her crimes-imaginary possibly in reference to infanticide, accurate in relation to an extinguished partilineage-can only be understood with reference to the beliefs and cultural fears pervasive during the Renaissance, which are different from our own. The true extent of Lady Macbeth's evil is only comprehended when an understanding of cultural fears and traditions are

explored. Although there are many relevant lessons that can be drawn from a reading of Lady Macbeth, because these are predominantly historically placed, this play more than any of the others interrogated as part of the thesis, more significantly highlights the implications of historical beliefs, different to those of today. The chapter on Lady Macbeth firstly highlights the differences between then and now. The chapter secondly demonstrates the importance of undertaking an historical and critical reading of Lady Macbeth generally and her references to crime specifically. Without doing so being able to understand her thoughts, and the impact they may have had on a Renaissance audience may be lost in their historic translation, as they are very different to the thoughts and fears of a modern audience. Ultimately the lessons ingrained in the work come with a warning, that the practitioner of the work needs to have some level of awareness in relation to the historical references made throughout *Macbeth* in order to fully apply a transformative encounter to those engaging with the work. Without doing so there are potential dangers that the participants are engaging with issues that are not fully understood, if the historical influences of the work have not been identified. This play, potentially more than the others, demonstrates the careful manner in which the work should be selected in order to be used alongside marginalised (and potentially vulnerable) communities of people, as the issues addressed within the work are complex and the characters are morally ambiguous. Distancing the participants from both character and issue would remain important, therefore the historical implications of the work offer an appropriate distance from the play for the participants to be able to identify opportunities for change that should and potentially can take place.

8.2. Provocation two: subverting the universalising discourse to avoid generalisations, assumptions and taken-for-granted beliefs about Shakespeare's work

The justification behind universalising Shakespeare's work appears to be founded in the notion presented by English-speaking cultural authorities as:

> 'good for you […] No matter the efforts within the academy at the end of the twentieth century to historicise production and reception of Shakespeare, to demystify the cultural and ideological processes by which he became 'top-poet' and generally to debunk bardolatry, producers and audiences of Shakespeare in the theatre are still quite comfortable with assumptions about his universal relevance' (Escolme, 2013, p.10).

The idea of universalising Shakespeare's work is not only unimaginative, but can be potentially dangerous when used within applied theatre practice. This is because the universal discourse is socially engineered and universalises experience. It does not acknowledge that Shakespeare has a different purpose at different times, but instead perpetuates the snobbery that to be 'clever or important or accepted you have to know some Shakespeare' (Irish, 2008, p.10). The danger for an applied theatre practitioner is that universalisation is fundamentally at odds with offering marginalised communities a voice that potentially celebrates diversity. In this way Shakespeare's plays can be used as a means of supporting, rather than resisting the establishment that promotes his work as valuable, which is in juxtaposition to applied theatre's purposes, values and ambitions.

The second provocation of practice recommends moving away from being 'comfortable' with the suggestion that we can identify with a culture that existed 400 years ago, and instead seek opportunities to be distanced from the work to identify the differences and not similarities with the plays. The distance allows participants minds to be more concentrated upon the opportunities for change and transformation.

A side effect of universalising Shakespeare's work is the risk that Shakespeare's work is used as a universally available and accessible resource, rather than significant and useful learning material. When practitioners of applied theatre use Shakespeare's work as a tool to aid transformation, it remains important for them to consider whether Shakespeare is important to the explorations of transformation they aim to capture, or whether he is just a universally available source, made popular because of cultural values. It must be avoided that we use Shakespeare's work incorrectly otherwise his use is for universal application rather than universal quality.

The readings of *Hamlet*, offer a clear presentation of how assumptions can be bound up in the readings of Shakespeare's plays and characters. Hamlet's soliloquies are often interpreted as real interactions with the complexities of the mind and are argued to provide in depth explorations which may be helpful for anyone attempting to understand issues with mental health. There is no denying the fact that one may identify with the pain of Hamlet. There is also a relevant argument for the idea that through *Hamlet* one may learn more about their own state of mind. However, it is important to remember that Shakespeare is also demonstrating dramatic (rather than medical) skill and *Hamlet* is a story of a man using a range of strategies (including madness) to exact revenge. The readings of *Hamlet* historical or otherwise move from real madness to crafted versions of madness and there remain complications when participants are asked to read their own state of mental health through a theatrically constructed version of 'madness'. Although there are aspects of the play that tell the audience something about 'madness', there is a danger that from a 21st century perspective we may be looking backward with a modern concept of madness with the hope to learn something about modern clinical madness. Instead this provocation suggests using historical considerations of the work to identify the differences in order

for change to take place. Due to mental health being a sensitive topic, one must be cautious as to how they are applying out dated views from a playwright exploring 'madness' over four hundred years ago. They should not be promoted as universal, but rather beneficial to explore in the differences that are offered between then and now. This safe distance also reiterates provocation one, which suggests offering participants a safe distance from the work, particularly if the work is addressing difficult issues such as mental health.

8.3. Provocation three: Challenging the concept of universal truths to demonstrate where differences and not similarities exist.

There are many 'truths' that are advertised in Shakespeare's work as universal. But universal truths imply an ethical issue which would be at odds with applied theatre ambitions. Take for instance a universalisation of the issue of murder (in *Macbeth* for instance) universalising murder, would therefore mean that every person committing or thinking about committing murder would think or undertake the same action, every time. We can safely say this is not a universal maxim. But beyond this is the suggestion that universal truths imply there are no differences and just similarities when interacting with a range of issues. The purpose of new historicism and historicisation is therefore to explore the differences and highlight that universal truths can be challenged. In an applied theatre setting this affords many more voices to be heard, and gives value to the participant's personal interactions with what they believe the work is attempting to address. This will also help to prevent imbalances of power whereby certain groups override others, and will also prevent dominant cultures from justifying actions that benefit ulterior motives. This thesis is not suggesting that there are no similarities at all between then and now. It does suggest that Shakespeare's

plays should be explored for their differences so that change and transformation can be identified in what has already taken place, and what still needs to take place. Historicisation allows us to grapple with unresolved questions that are important when considering change. A universalising discourse simply eradicates the possibility of diversity and if used by applied theatre practitioners in order to achieve transformation is in danger of suggesting that we universalise the actual experience of living too. New historicism and historicisation has therefore afforded analysis of the work to be concentrated in order to find important differences that can depict where change needs to take place. It is also a useful tool to subvert the universalising discourse and universal truths.

Measure for Measure demonstrated that change is possible when exploring the differences between then and now. The play moves from two different penal systems of punishment: the system/age of terror (punishment of the body), and the system/age of confinement (punishment of the soul). The systems were demonstrated through the characters of Angelo and the Duke, and suggested something significant about the workings of Renaissance prisons and the justice system that placed people there. The two systems of punishment were importantly only identifiable when looking back in history at the progression in prison during, and after Shakespeare was writing the play. The play offers clear considerations in regards to the penal environment and whether or not its structures are beneficial for those inside the prison and/or overseeing/managing the environment. In concentrating the mind upon the historical implications of the work it became clear that the play offers a beneficial opportunity to question the prison and justice system, and the nature of crime. The play may be helpful for the prisoner and the prison service in learning more about how the different roles in a penal environment interact. Although it is important to reiterate that these

plays are not saying something about these systems today, they can still be used for the purposes of change and difference. The thesis is not claiming that we need to learn from Renaissance law. There were many corrupt aspects to its enforcement, as demonstrated throughout *Measure for Measure*. The thesis does suggest however, that there are opportunities to interrogate justice, mercy, punishment and control by participating with the work and its historical influences.

The reading of *Richard III* highlighted inherent historical implications in relation to the medical discourse and terminology that underpinned the idea of Disability in Renaissance England. Shakespeare presents a character who faces adversity; but who causes it too. In Richard we see a mix of Renaissance values, and more modern and advanced thoughts surrounding Disability. Shakespeare's presentation appears to afford an opportunity to consider the multifarious ways in which we can speak about Disability. Through the character of Richard, Shakespeare is able to provide a dynamic consideration of the body, its challenges, limitations and opportunities. Although advances have been made both medically and socially in regards to Disability, the plays hold important interrogations for participants to unpick in relation to Disability and the presentation of the body (on and off stage). The play demonstrates where changes have been made and what changes were still yet to make, in relation to its historical considerations. By combining Shakespeare's plays with an historical reading of the work, aspects of change can be identified. This should offer participants important dialogues around the historical interactions with Disability. In line with the history of Disability Theatre, it is clear there is still a long way to go in helping the Disabled become more visible in this field. The play has therefore remained important to interrogate particularly in relation to the past and in order to reflect upon exactly what changes have been made, and what might still need to change. As there are

different forms of behaviour between then and now, it remains important to question what our contemporaries did, and what we do now, and the relationship between the two. By copying the surface details of the world through a universalising discourse, the world is offered as a limited vision of lived experience, and makes up only one version of this experience. It is therefore important to read these plays through an historical vernacular and to be able to identify the differences and not just similarities. Richard's own experiences of Disability vastly change throughout the plays and suggest Shakespeare is able to provide a dynamic consideration of the body, its challenges and opportunities, which would be useful to interrogate for a range of applied theatre environments engaged with the considerations of Disability. The reading warns of the complexities when using modern interpretations to understand the cultural clues of Disability, which are not universal. It simultaneously highlights how the multifarious manner in which Shakespeare's work discusses Disability is valuable to those inside and outside of this community.

Summary:

Shakespeare's work is challenging for any community accessing its content, hence why a universalising discourse is ill-advised and inappropriate, particularly if transformation is to be achieved. The thesis recommends that a critical and historical reading of Shakespeare's plays remains important to applied theatre practice to subvert the universalising discourse, avoid assumptive and taken-for-granted beliefs about Shakespeare's work to override the transformative intentions of the project, and to offer the participant's a safe distance when exploring the characters of Shakespeare's plays.

The work should not be depicted as universally relevant, nor should it be used as simply a universally available source. There must be purpose and intent behind why Shakespeare's work is beneficial, and universality is unimaginative and potentially dangerous to the desires of achieving transformation, particularly when considering the complexities of the participants who may be accessing these texts.

It is suggested that, regulated through theatrical means, Shakespeare's work is able to demonstrate to participants the process of historical change through illuminating the significance of differences between then and now when identifying opportunities for change and transformation. The history of Shakespeare's plays are important to acknowledge and the overarching provocation is that by making participants aware of the history of the work, the participants are better placed to see the contents of things- its appropriateness and the success or failure of it- so that change and transformation can be considered, from a safe distance from the issue itself.

Chapter Nine: Conclusion

This study began with an interest in exploring the challenges faced when combining Shakespeare's work with applied theatre settings, for transformative purposes. The thesis was positioned in relation to debates and discourses relevant to the field of applied theatre, participatory theatre, marginalised communities, and Shakespearean studies. The introduction contains extended discussion on previously existing research and literature on this topic and outlined the parameters for the study. The conclusion section aims to look at new knowledge discovered and how it is positioned against the existing knowledge. In this chapter, the main findings with regards to the thesis are summarised. General conclusions based on the findings made throughout the thesis are offered in answer to the chapter's sub-questions, before providing specific conclusions which have been determined in relation to the overarching focus of this thesis. The limitations of this thesis are considered and suggestions for further research are presented alongside an indication of the key contributions to knowledge.

The structure of the conclusion is to revisit the three propositions outlined in the rationale, and how their coinciding research parameters have been explored.

9.1 The challenges of applied theatre

Through an interrogation of the inherent risks, challenges and complications bound to applied theatre projects, and its desire to achieve transformation and levels of active participation, the thesis uncovered aspects of the work that present challenges to the practice before Shakespeare's plays have been considered as a tool to aid transformation. Chapters 3, 5.2, 6.2, and 7.2 addressed the general challenges of applied theatre, participation, transformation, prison theatre, Disability theatre and

theatre therapy. These chapters answered the following questions:

- What are the ensuing challenges for applied theatre when attempting to achieve transformation?
- What are the challenges for a format of theatre that aims to levels of ‘achieve participation’?
- What are the challenges posed in theatre attempting to access marginalised communities?
- What are the challenges for applied theatre’s application within each marginalised community?

Despite benefits being discovered within the practice of applied theatre (Landy, 2012: Prentki & Preston, 2009: Nicholson, 2005: Balfour, 2004: Thompson, 2003: Erven, 2001: Boal, 1995), the intentions to achieve transformation (Haider, McLoughlin & Scott, 2011: Kuppers, 2007: Balfour & Somers 2006: Bundy, 2006: Kramer, Chamberlain, McNamara et al, 2004: Balfour, 2004: Taylor, 2003: Prendergast & Saxton, 1999: Matarasso, 1997: Popenoe, 1995) and the desire to achieve levels of active participation with marginalised communities (Rifkin, 2010: Thompson, 2000: Chambers, 1994) this area of practice remains problematic.

The achievement of transformation was found to be fraught with contradictions, political struggles and motivating agendas that were not always complimentary to an applied format of theatre (Jackson, 2007: Thompson, 2006: Neelands, 2006: Nicholson, 2005: Balfour, 2004: Taylor 2003). The intention of transformation was challenged by expressions of hierarchy and impositions of values that were not always shared between the community and the practitioner of the work (Nicholson, 2005). It

was discovered that assessing whether or not transformation could/had been achieved was part of a wider social context involved with measurement, funding and agenda and as such there were political implications surrounding the need to evaluate, limited by who is undertaking the evaluation(s) and who is allowed to influence the evaluation process. Governmental organisations, charitable trusts, arts councils and varying funding agencies become the stakeholders for applied theatre work and presented diverging interests, intrapersonal conflicts, power positions, and various values which attach themselves to the projects and present challenges in achieving applied theatre's overarching purposes.

The thesis discovered potential for a distance between participant and practitioner that meant the work can be done *to* the participant not *with* them and the work could be viewed as a vehicle to undermine collaborative reflection by situating human experience as an individualistic transaction, rather than a communal negotiation. In this regard transformation was found to be complex and unpredictable, difficult to measure and appeared at risk of posing as an imposition on communities of people.

It was also found that participatory forms of work can evoke challenges in both its delivery and reception. Challenges for the practice were found to result from the requirements of participation. From manipulation and full citizen control, risks to self-esteem, public esteem, even psychological and physical well-being (White, 2013: Arnstein, 1969) to disempowerment and/or vulnerability. All provided tensions to the form of applied theatre work, and threatened its desire to achieve transformation.

When exploring the forms of theatre that fell under applied theatre's umbrella term, it was found that challenges in accessing a range of marginalised communities was also evident. The three areas of focus (prison, Disability, and therapy) represent disparate

forms of theatre that can fall under applied theatre's umbrella term. The thesis suggests that these disparate forms did not always appear to complement applied theatre's overriding intentions.

Prison theatre is unable to 'talk back to power' but its participants do have a clear transformation to make. The complicated tension between the workings and purpose of the prison context against the intentions and ambitions of an artistic programme were found to be an issue within this field. Rehabilitative programmes also appeared to have a difficult time validating the success of their work, with findings suggesting that the prisoners, by engaging in theatre work, are simply fulfilling a requirement of their sentence (Hughes, 2008: Falshaw et al, 2003: Moller, 2003: Duguid & Pawson, 1998). Analysis suggested that the projects may be more beneficial in their ability to control the prisoner when they are serving time, than in transforming them ready for their release. This highlighted 'the politics of this practice, the funding bodies which support it and the institutions which enable it' (McAvinchey, 2011, p.79) and suggested that prison theatre was riddled with far-reaching complications, risks and challenges and meant that applied theatre's intentions for transformation could be difficult to attain.

Dramatherapy can embed the idea of transformation clearly, but it appears constricted by the parameters of therapeutic rather than dramatic practice. The disciplines of theatre *and* therapy combined were found to also yield complications (Campbell & Kear, 2001). As the work depends on its participants and their openness to drama *and* therapy in order for the project to succeed, this form of applied theatre was fraught with disparate parts of practice, the different and diverse qualifications and skills practitioners would need to facilitate this work (as therapist and dramatist

simultaneously), and the notions of knowledge and positions of power which mean patients can be vulnerable and therapists are ‘inevitably engaged in a political activity’ (Epston & White, 1992, p.29).

Disability theatre appeared limited to inclusive purposes rather than transformative intentions and the inherent aims of applied theatre- in terms of questioning and interrogation- did not appear to be fully realised. Exploring Disability theatre raised challenges in regards to the levels of interrogation the community is afforded. Disability Theatre’s concern with the idea of inclusion often appeared to overpower the desire to attain other theatrical necessities of applied theatre such as transformation, questioning or interrogation. This contradicted applied theatre’s desire to question and transform and suggested that the difficult realities for people with Disabilities are avoided instead of explored. Therefore the overarching intention for applied theatre appeared an inherent challenge and fundamental difficulty, which means that the combination of applied theatre and the Disabled community was highlighted as questionable in terms of its compatibility. This highlights an area for future research and an area of key contribution and originality to the thesis.

The exploration into the context of the work demonstrated the complexity of the practice and highlighted the difficulty when an artistic practice attempts to achieve something as complicated as transformation. The thesis suggests that, before Shakespeare’s work has even been considered, the applied theatre practitioner must face many challenges. It was important to explore such challenges as a way to offer a distinction between challenges that are bound to applied theatre peripherally and that challenges are provoked through the use of Shakespeare’s work specifically. It is

evident throughout the thesis that the forms of theatre falling under the category of applied theatre were unable to extricate themselves from their inherent challenges.

There were three major findings in reaction to this area of proposition:

1) Applied theatre remains a contested area of practice. The overlapping terminologies, complex territories, ever shifting interpretations (Balfour, 2009) remain challenging and as the thesis suggests applied theatre, as an umbrella term, remains contested.

2) Forms of theatre that fall under the term do not always seem complimentary of the intentions of applied theatre practice. Disability theatre in particular seemed to contradict applied theatre's intentions to question and interrogate. This highlighted a need to question whether the forms falling under the term of applied theatre are indeed complimentary to applied theatre and belong in this category of practice.

3) The format of the work remains as much of a challenge to this field of practice, as the tools chosen to combine with the applied theatre format to achieve transformation (e.g. Shakespeare's work).

9.2 Universalising Shakespeare's work

Chapters 4, 5.4, 5.5, 6.4, and 7.4 of the thesis informed the main provocations of practice. They were concerned with addressing the proposition that assumptive and taken-for-granted beliefs tied up within a universalising discourse about Shakespeare's work, often override the consideration of the political and cultural values embedded in Shakespeare's own theatre. Through applying new historicism and Brecht's historicisation and verfremdungseffekt to a range of Shakespeare's plays

important political and cultural values important at the time in which Shakespeare's plays were created could be acknowledged. The thesis was able to explore important differences in the values presented in Shakespeare's play through historicisation. These chapters answered the following questions:

- What values and notions about humanity might Shakespeare depict/promote through his work?
- What kind of critical attitudes, values and/or assumptions are bound up with Shakespeare's work and/or promoted through it?

An historical reading of the work is offered as a relevant tool to help understand the issues presented in the work, and through new historicism, historicisation and verfremdungseffekt a participant is offered a relevant distance from the issue, in order for their minds to remain concentrated, and for the lessons of the work to be discovered and interrogated.

Currently there is a tendency to use Shakespeare's work as part of a universalising discourse but the results of the thesis attempt to highlight the danger in defining Shakespeare's uses by means of a moral vocabulary operating over 400 years ago. The thesis demonstrates how this can be complicated and at times compromised. The thesis has therefore been concerned with thinking about Shakespeare's work in a different way to interrogations that are currently taking place within applied theatre (A.C. Bradley's character-based approach, G. Wilson Knight's theme-based reading, Spurgeon's image clusters).

Using the literary method of new historicism aimed to allow the 'historical elements in the Shakespearean play-text to reveal themselves as a poetics of performance that

engenders the possibility of transformation' (Herold, 2014, p.64). The thesis suggests that an exploration into the interweaving of Shakespeare's past and his value in the present is important to consider. The thesis did not make claims to operate only from Renaissance ideology, but suggested that the lessons Shakespeare's work presents are fundamentally influenced by, and are attached to beliefs prevalent at the time of the play's creation (Hawkes, 1986: Greenblatt, 2000: Orgel, 2002, Bratton, 2003: Gurr, 2012, Parvini, 2012: Cohrane, 2015). The texts explored when undertaking critical and historical investigations into Shakespeare's works presented a range of important considerations relevant to this area of practice.

Chapter eight drew upon findings made in the earlier chapters that undertake a Renaissance reading of a range of Shakespeare's plays. This chapter offers the main provocations for the practice. The use of new historicism, and Brecht's historicisation and verfremdungseffekt demonstrated the importance of remaining focused on the past to reflect where changes could be made in the present. It helped to challenge the concept of universal truth and rationality and reiterated the importance of subverting a universalising discourse. By viewing Shakespeare's work as being distanced from the present, the lessons of the plays can be more effectively understood as the participant is no longer bound to making parallels to their own lives. In concentrating on a fictional past the participants can identify opportunities for change from a safe distance, whilst still understanding the implications the opportunities for change may have today.

Through undertaking a Renaissance reading of a range of Shakespeare's plays, the thesis demonstrated how, if the mind is concentrated on the past and can recognise the differences and *not* similarities between then and now; opportunities for change and transformation can be more appropriately identified. The Renaissance readings

offered important demonstrations of how lessons can remain universalised if methods such as historicisation and new historicism are not applied to the interrogations of the work. Through plays that deal with therapy, disability and prison the thesis demonstrated how these methods can be applied. The thesis offered three main provocations for practice that suggests benefit when:

1) Using new historicism, historicisation and verfremdungseffekt in order afford the participants a safe distance from the issues of the work, when exploring the opportunities transformation in Shakespeare's work.
2) Using new historicism, historicisation and verfremdungseffekt to subvert the universalising discourse often attached to Shakespeare's plays, helping to avoid generalisations, assumptions and taken-for-granted beliefs about the work.
3) Using new historicism, historicisation and verfremdungseffekt to challenge the concept of universal truth to demonstrate where differences and not similarities exist.

9.3 Shakespeare and marginalised communities

Through three salient case studies that took place in three specific and marginalised environments, the thesis explored the challenges faced by combining Shakespeare's work with different areas of practice for purposes of healing, change and transformation.

Chapters 5.6, 6.5, and 7.5 explored Shakespeare's use with prisoners, Disabled communities and within therapeutic settings. These chapters answered the following questions:

- Where is Shakespeare's work used as a tool in applied theatre settings, and why is the work regarded as a beneficial addition to this area of practice?

- What challenges might each community face when combining Shakespeare with the intentions of applied theatre?

Each case study presented clear examples of the different environments and communities Shakespeare's work is 'put to use' in. It demonstrated successes and challenges of the work and highlighted multifarious methods in which Shakespeare's work is used and why.

Many reasons were offered in relation to why Shakespeare's work had been chosen as a tool for practice. Some of these justifications were assumptive and reiterated some of the initial concerns identified within the thesis rationale. The ESC spoke of how 'anybody can do Shakespeare given the right access and opportunity to participate with the text […] We can learn much from these stories' (Werner in Pensalfinini, 2016, p.138). Blue Apple appeared to interact with Shakespeare in order to 'celebrate the talents of our actors through the greatest plays in the world' (Blue Apple) because of how 'Shakespeare speaks to us all' (Lewis, 2012). CVP spoke of how the participants are said to find new purpose through Shakespeare and that using Shakespeare within their work 'helps to navigate through the painful places they've been ... to heal the wounds most of us can't see' (Lewis, 2012). Shakespeare's work, in this sense, appeared to be reduced to a universally available source.

The cultural values attached to Shakespeare's works were also found across the case studies. Wray suggested that the ESC offered appropriations of Shakespeare's work in order to 'carry cultural capital' (Wray, 2011). Blue Apple suggested that engaging

with Shakespeare is essential in order to achieve any level of social inclusion. Both articulations served to circulate particular ideas about the value of Shakespeare's work, indicating that any level of engagement with Shakespeare is an unambiguous sign of advancement. The CVP however considered Shakespeare's uses differently. McLoughlin discussed the importance of looking at breath control in Shakespearean verse and its physical effect upon the veterans. The CVP appeared to attach their thoughts regarding the value of the work more explicitly to the therapeutic environment in which they were operating. They echoed some of the sentiments originally presented in the literature review regarding how Shakespeare's texts 'can be transformed into a therapeutic intervention' (Hunter, 2013), or how the 'literature can have a positive effect on the brain and trigger moments of emotional recognition, reappraisal of dull norms and an excited sense of new achievement – all at once' (Davis, 2015).

All companies spoke about Shakespeare's uses, benefits and lessons but there was often little interrogation into the play texts explored by each company in any documentation surrounding the projects and a lot of the arguments across the projects in relation to the adaptation of Shakespeare's work were not explicitly centred on the desire to understand Shakespeare's work more thoroughly. At the most basic level, the ESC choose Shakespeare's plays because the prison accepted the play without question and the work was funded. Blue Apple used Shakespeare's plays to help aid levels of inclusion and discussed how choosing Shakespeare's plays allowed the Disabled community to join in with culture. Blue Apple were concerned with the opportunities of inclusion and in line with the challenges already identified between the combination of Disability theatre and applied theatre, interrogation and questioning were not a priority. In a similar manner the CVP were more concerned with the

therapeutic effects Shakespeare's patterns of speech can achieve, less was discussed in relation to the play text themselves and more space given to therapeutic concerns which meant that the projects did not interrogate the lessons found in Shakespeare's work. The companies very rarely referenced, or documented the importance of the content or context of any of the plays explored.

The companies did however, acknowledge that the use of Shakespeare's work could be challenging. For example Blue Apple were aware of the challenges for their actors playing Shakespearean roles stating 'sometimes people with Down's Syndrome find it difficult to separate fiction from reality, so *Hamlet* has been blurring with their own real life, and with this comes difficulties with the emotions of the characters' (Lewis, 2012). CVP explained how a lot of their work was about 'identity'. Through identifying similarities with Shakespeare's characters, the men are able to find who they were and/or are. The participants themselves discussed the struggles in playing certain characters like *Hamlet,* and player Johnson discusses that 'When I do his speech to be or not to be […] about going through the motions of killing himself […] I immediately thought good lord- that's going to be quite a challenge' (in Ledgard, 2013). The participants themselves were offered the space to reflect upon the damaging effects of work that requires character identification and the work acknowledges some of the limitations this may provoke. ESC documented the inclusion and exclusion of certain aspects of the play *Macbeth*. Lady Macbeth's suicide was included and it appeared that its function in remaining within the adaptation was to link directly and specifically to the prison culture being explored. It was acknowledged that the prisoners were being asked to face a particular issue despite the vulnerabilities this may evoke.

Although all projects had different reasons as to why they wanted their community groups to engage with Shakespeare's work, there did not appear to be any concerns that a lot of the play texts chosen, mirrored difficult realities. It remains a questionable technique to ask anyone to face and replay instances for the purpose of a theatre project and without interrogation into the play texts selected it also remains questionable as to whether the plays were used for the lessons that they depict, rather than because of the universalising discourse attached to Shakespeare's work. This ultimately questions the notion that Shakespeare's work is an undisputed source of moral good for a range of diverse and disparate communities.

Each case study presented complexities with the desire to combine Shakespeare's works with different and at times challenging marginalised environments. Although there were often cross over considerations in regards to how Shakespeare's work is 'put to use' it also highlighted where deviations across environments occur. This suggests that there is not one specific blueprint for applied practice and each community needs to be considered individually and independently before the work can be delivered.

There were three major findings in reaction to this area of proposition:

1) Each case study demonstrated how the complexities of the practice of applied theatre continued to present challenges to projects being delivered within specific marginalised communities.

2) The concerns identified in the thesis rationale, with regards to assumptive and taken-for-granted beliefs regarding Shakespeare's work appeared (on occasion) to have a role to play in the realisation of these projects. Many of the

practitioners appeared concerned with the cultural values and levels of inclusion that could be achieved through using Shakespeare's work.

3) The companies explored throughout the thesis discussed a range of techniques used to explore the play texts, but these were not always aligned to how the lessons of the work were complimentary to the aspects of transformation they wished to achieve.

9.4 Overall, what do these findings say about the use of Shakespeare's work in applied settings?

From the research, the challenge of using Shakespeare's work within applied theatre projects appears threefold. Firstly, applied theatre as a form concerned with achieving transformation is bound to inherent challenges. Secondly, because it is commonplace across a wide range of work to attach Shakespeare's plays to a universalising discourse (Dobson, 2011: Taylor, 2010: Irish, 2008: Bristol, 1996: Adams, 1989: Widdowson, 1981), this results in assumptive beliefs and values about the work being promoted and important discourses being ignored. Thirdly, when participants engage with Shakespeare's work in applied theatre settings, they are asked to participate with the work to find lessons to help them transform, which can mean that participants are asked to identify with characters that are potentially complex, morally and mentally.

The major recommendation for practice is an encouragement to undertake an historical interrogation into Shakespeare's plays to subvert the universalising discourse 'that would not be acceptable in alternative critical situations' (Wray, 2011). This will also prevent assumptive and taken-for-granted beliefs about Shakespeare's work from being promoted. Using new historicism and Brecht's historicisation and

verfremdungseffekt will also enable participants to remain a safe distance away from the issues of the text, and it allows the work to challenge the idea of universal truths, exploring differences, rather than similarities, in order to realise transformation and change.

Positively, the thesis demonstrates how Shakespeare is successfully applied alongside Disability, therapy and prison. It is encouraging that many people support this work, and participants reflect positively in regards to projects of this nature. It is work worthy of funding and support and should continue to be developed. However, the inherent challenges of applied theatre will continue to exist within the practice; it will never be without challenge or contestation. This means that the challenge of making Shakespeare work in applied theatre settings and for transformative purposes will remain a complex area of practice and the achievement of transformation remains a challenge; with or without Shakespeare.

9.5 Limitations of the study

Although the thesis reached its initial aims, there were some unavoidable limitations.

9.5.1 The interpretative research approach

The interpretative research approach was complimentary to this field of study. It allowed the thesis to be open to new knowledge, and find opportunities to reflect upon honest and immediate reactions to the work from the viewpoint of the participants and practitioners engaged with the practice and operating within the field. However, the thesis is also mindful that challenges were presented in relation to understanding the meanings of the findings and interpreting participant's articulations surrounding the work. This linked to the overarching challenges of the practice of applied theatre

generally which were considered within its own chapters (see 3.1, 3.2) and the thesis acknowledged that the reliance upon artist's written claims and other documentation of practice in discussions about previously published material that addresses this field of study could pose contradictions to some of the challenges identified within the thesis. However using the claims was justified as important to interrogate as part of the critical discourse analysis. It allowed for an unpicking of how artists in the field regard and review the work, explore important and potentially continuous claims associated with the work, to highlight through discourse any limitations in current practice.

Further challenges of an interpretive approach were found when trying to discern a reading of Shakespeare via a specific historical context. Many critics find that the combination of an interpretive research approach alongside the literary tool of new historicism pays too much attention to context and not enough to the literary source. The thesis tried to be mindful of this hence why the recommendation has been that Renaissance ideology should not be the only tool to aid the understanding of the play texts. It is used for demonstrative purposes throughout the thesis and as a way to uncover, question and subvert the assumptive and taken-for-granted values that are often attached to Shakespeare's plays via a universalising discourse.

9.5.2 The ever-changing nature of the field

The thesis attempted to reference some of the major applied theatre programmes currently in existence (predominantly in the UK and USA), which have used Shakespeare's work within applied theatre settings. It also attempted to cover a range of marginalised communities and the challenges they might face when engaging with this area of practice. However the thesis acknowledges that due to the ever-changing

nature of this field it was impossible to ensure that all information provided was the most up-to-date. Although the material is relevant to this area of study, new articles, projects and investigations continued to emerge. For instance, at the start of the thesis the field of Disability theatre was significantly under-interrogated, and it had been the intention of the thesis to highlight this as an area of concern for the practice. However recent publications within the field of Disability theatre such as: Johnston, K. (2016) *Disability Theatre and Modern Drama,* Kuppers, P. (2017) *Theatre & Disability,* Barton-Farcas, S. (2017) *A Practical Manual for Inclusion in the Art* meant that this argument point was redundant and a new focus was required.[38] What this did however demonstrate was a positive surge of interest into the field of applied theatre generally, and helped to highlight the thesis as a relevant area of interest to the practice of theatre studies generally.

9.5.3 The breadth and diversity of the research area

The thesis attempted to cover Shakespeare, applied theatre, participatory forms of theatrical work, transformation, prison theatre, theatre therapy, and Disability theatre, alongside the challenges, benefits and the uses of all of the aforementioned. This may appear to dilute some aspects of the thesis and mean that some interrogations of the work appear as more overview. Had the thesis focussed on one marginalised community only it may have been able to offer deeper-interrogation of the parameters that influence each individual field, meaning that questions that arose in relation to new findings could have been explored in greater detail as soon as they were discovered. However by widening the field the thesis has been able to make important analytical comparisons across the practices, help identify new findings, provide a

[38] Note that this is Disability theatre, and not Shakespeare with Disability theatre, the latter still remains under-interrogated.

deeper and more encompassed understanding of the practice, and suggest areas for further research.

9.5.4 Combining Shakespeare's work with Disability theatre

The work in the chapters considering Shakespeare and Disability theatre were perhaps more peripheral than they had originally intended to be. This is particularly evident in the literature review where limited texts were called upon in relation to Disability theatre generally, with no source texts referred to in relation to Shakespeare's use with Disabled communities specifically. Although this meant that the thesis was limited by the amount of research that could be undertaken within this practice and for this particular body of research; it has allowed the thesis to undertake an original investigation in this field.

9.5.5 Historical contexts and Shakespeare's texts

Although a logical combination between Shakespeare's work and the different marginalised communities being explored were made in the chapters concerning an historical reading of Shakespeare's plays; this did not necessarily mean that these texts are used by applied theatre practitioners within that specific community. The texts selected do not always align to the related case study examples (although some examples did align such as CVP's work with *Hamlet*). Although it may have been more useful to attach this section of work more consistently to the case studies and/or the communities explored, if the thesis had limited itself to this condition there were important lessons presented in the texts that could have been missed. Although this was a challenge to manage, it meant that the thesis was able to spend more time making connections between the findings, drawing upon richer research to inform the chapters.

9.6 Originality and key contribution to knowledge

9.6.1 Adding to existing knowledge

This study has provided a deeper understanding and contributed new knowledge around debate relative to combining Shakespeare's work with applied formats of theatre. The existing literature highlighted that Shakespeare's work was used as a tool for transformation in a wide range of applied practices, and that many people are articulating and engaging with the *benefits* of the practice. However, this thesis wanted to focus upon the challenges, risks and limitations of the field which are currently under-interrogated. Through studying a wide range of literature relevant to this specific area of practice it is clear that a variety of issues are presented and interrogated in relation to the field, however the thesis highlights how these are currently widespread and sometimes only peripherally acknowledged. This thesis attempts to centralise a range of debates regarding applied practice, and its use of Shakespeare specifically.

9.6.2. Already known material- new interpretation

Although historical readings of Shakespeare's work is not new, and a range of Shakespearean scholars (including Hawkes, 1986: Greenblatt, 2000: Orgel, 2002, Bratton, 2003: Gurr, 2012, Parvini, 2012: Cohrane, 2015) have used literary tools such as new historicism to explore Shakespeare's work, the thesis uses this tool to identify provocations for practitioners hoping to use Shakespeare's work as a tool to aid transformation. This aspect of the thesis contributes to new knowledge in presenting an historical reading of a range of Shakespeare's plays to subvert the assumptive and taken-for-granted beliefs that a universalising discourse can provide applied theatre projects. The key contribution to knowledge is that it firstly provides a method in which

to interrogate the work in greater detail. Secondly it provides provocations to practitioners when using Shakespeare to aid transformation and ensure that their participants have a safe distance from the issues being explored in the texts. Thirdly, it helps to avoid assumptive and taken-for-granted beliefs that are often promoted when using Shakespeare's work as part of a universalising discourse, keeping participants at a safe distance from the issues being explored.

9.6.3 Achievement of transformation

Although there are many studies into applied theatre practice and its use of Shakespeare, currently the focus is upon the advantages of the practice. This thesis has addressed the challenges not only in relation to the form, but in relation to applied theatre's transformative intentions. This aspect of the thesis contributes to new knowledge in unpicking the purpose at the heart of the work, and how this purpose may evoke its own challenges to the practice. The key contribution to knowledge is in relation to the focus upon transformation and how this is achieved via the application of applied theatre generally, and the addition of Shakespeare's work specifically.

9.7 Suggestions for further research

The suggestion that Disability theatre and applied theatre may not be compatible in relation to their overarching intentions was an unexpected finding, and although it was beyond the remit of this particular thesis to explore this finding thoroughly, the discovery highlighted a new and important research area. It was interesting to discover that Blue Apple Theatre Company, as the selected case study explored as part of the Disability chapter, did not term their work as being influenced by applied theatre

practice which appeared to reiterate the complicated discourses attached to combining applied theatre and Disability theatre in general terms. It remains a point of interesting debate that Disabled theatre companies may not be able to align their work to applied practice. It suggests something significant about the practice in terms of achieving transformation, it implies that the desire for transformation is currently somewhat out of grasp, and it reiterates the absolute need to interrogate this field of study in much greater detail. Furthermore, the general questioning as to whether the disparate forms that appear under the umbrella terms of applied theatre are fully complimentary to applied theatre's intentions, widens the research in considering applied theatre as a field which attempts to align different practice, and potentially match different intentions.

The exploration of the universalising discourses attached to the use of Shakespeare's work was an important area of consideration throughout the thesis. Peripherally it appeared as though universalising discourses were also evident within the practice of applied theatre generally and prison, Disability and therapy theatre specifically. These were not interrogated as part of this thesis so as to not distract its focus, or dilute its main points; however an exploration of other universalising discourses that take place within applied theatre practice, and how this might challenge the practice further would be an important area for further research.

More general to this thesis are the suggestions of further research more relevant to the areas of performance theory. Questions such as 'what kind of Shakespeare do we end up with when the customary purpose of playing has been altered and the play is appropriated for other uses? (Herold, 2011) would be important to explore alongside what happens to Shakespeare performed when it is subjected to other uses? (E.g.

morphed into some other modes of theatre) (Herold, 2011). Linking the explorations of Shakespeare to the fidelity debate, it would be useful to explore whether Shakespeare is still Shakespeare when the plays have been subjected to other uses and forms of theatre?

Finally, to expand the ideas of the importance of an historical reading in greater detail and as an entire research area of its own, it would be important to consider whether or not other uses of performance, more evidently so than commercial productions, help us to situate our understandings of the plays within the historical and cultural contexts that originally produced them? (Herold, 2011).

9.8 Concluding statement

Reflecting on the propositions which led to this area of exploration, this study has helped to acknowledge the importance of interrogating practice of this nature. The original aim was to uncover the challenges of using Shakespeare's work within applied theatre settings for transformative purposes, and there is evidence of contribution to the overall body of knowledge by demonstrating the challenges of applied theatre, the companies using Shakespeare's work, and the importance of an historical interrogation surrounding Shakespeare's plays. Although examining Shakespeare's use within applied theatre is not new, this thesis has contributed to these debates and much more remains to be done in this field of research. Conclusively, the purpose of the thesis has been to help uncover provocations for practice when exploring applied theatre's use of Shakespeare's work for transformative purposes. The hope is that the provocations identified within this thesis can develop and further build on the discourses presented here.

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(86, 238 excluding footnotes, endnotes and textboxes)

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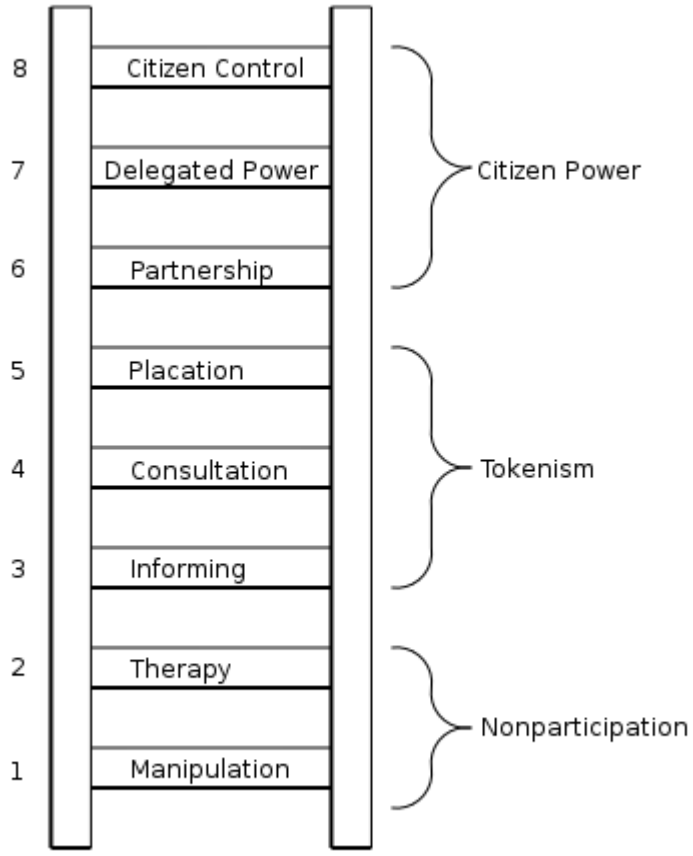
Appendices

Appendix One: Arnstein's Ladder of Participation



(Arnstein, 2010: 217)